

THE THEOLOGY OF  
CIVILIZATION

CHARLES F. DOLE

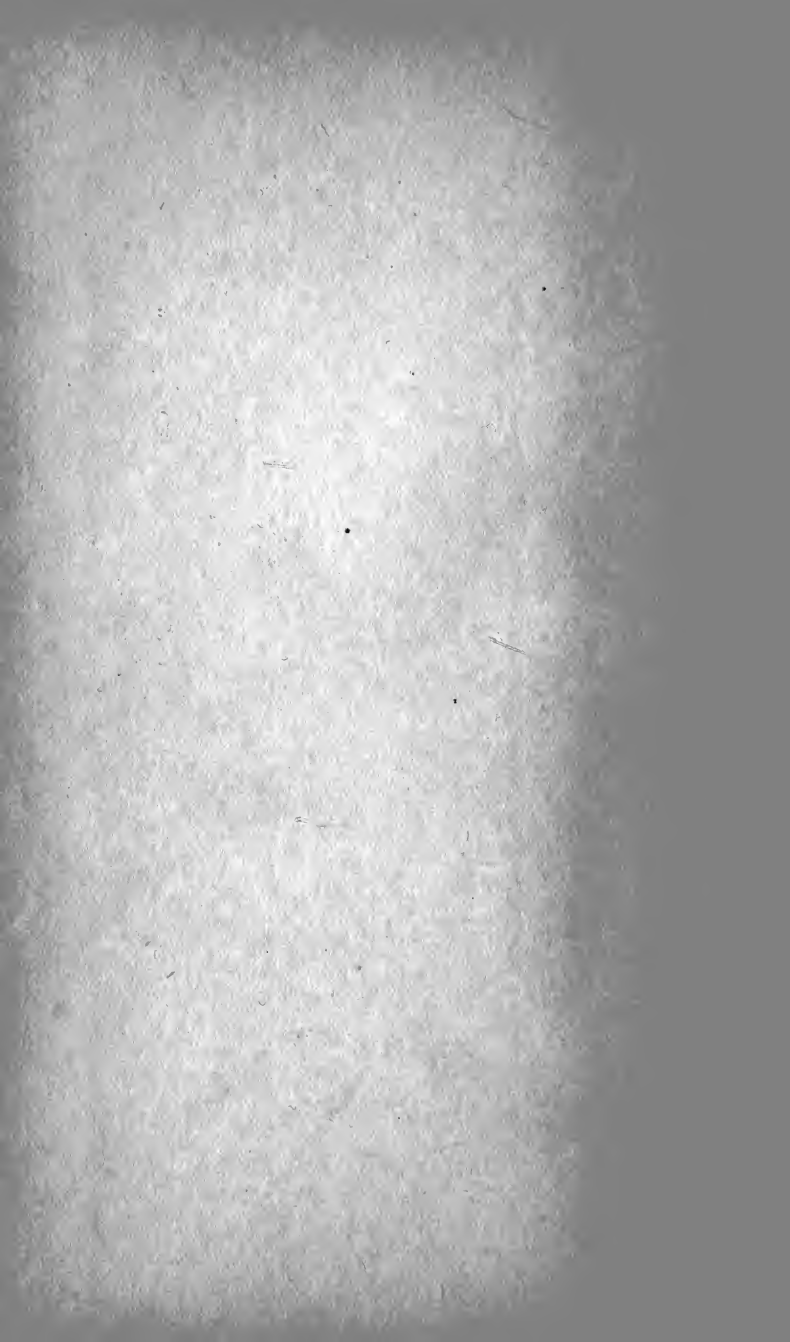
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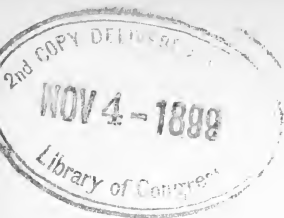
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THE  
Theology of Civilization

BY  
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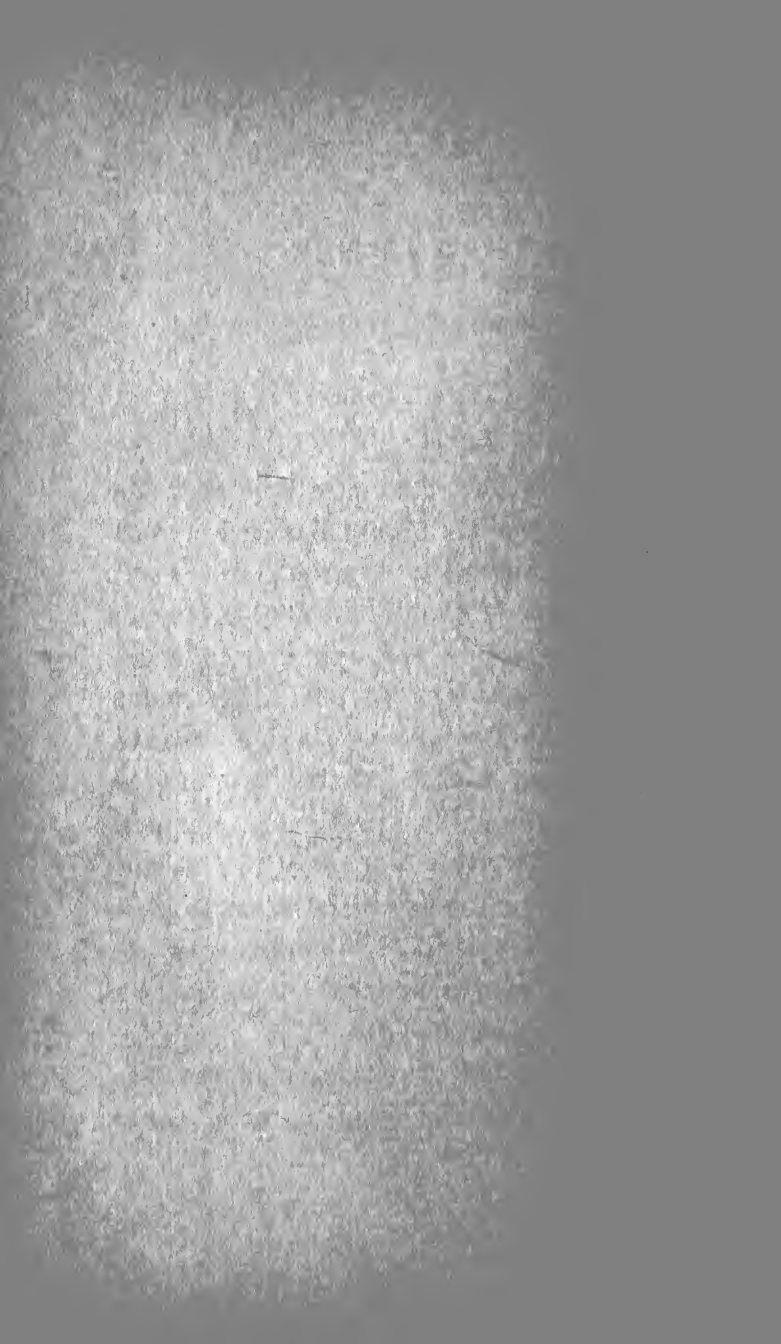
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## INTRODUCTION.

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IN 1897 I published a little book, "The Coming People," which received a very kindly and appreciative welcome from many readers. I tried to interpret the movements of modern life, in the only way in which they seem capable of an intelligible understanding, into the terms of a divine universe. As one who had begun his thinking as a sceptic and without a hopeful temperament, I boldly avowed my most serious and persistent conviction that the world is good and not bad, that life is abundantly worth living, that man is marching the way of a great and beautiful destiny.

The conviction of optimism, in the face of all the facts that seem to many minds

difficult to adjust, grows out of a foundation and structure of thought. This thought, as it has come to me, has seemed so interesting, so persuasive, so inspiring and helpful that I now venture to publish it, in the hope that what has helped one man may be of equal interest and service to others.

Perhaps there was never a time since man began to think when the problems of life for the individual, for society, for the State, for the future of humanity, seemed more tremendous than they appear at the close of the nineteenth century, as we take a long look ahead into the new times. There is seething unrest; there is doubt of the sanctions of religion; there is a sense of coming change; there is suspicion that premises and foundations, once unquestioned, are now perhaps undermined; there is challenging of existing institutions — social, economical, ecclesiastical. Are the present institutions such as the world will continue to find use for? There is dread mingled with hope. What possible revolutions may not impend,

setting the old order aside? The current forms of religion count millions of votaries. How firm a grip have they upon men's hearts and consciences? Do they succeed in giving weary men rest, comfort, and inspiration? How far do they content and satisfy thoughtful minds? How strong a leverage do they offer for ethical and social uplifting? Is religion losing its hold upon the modern world? Is that most noble of all forms of religion, Christianity, proving inadequate to new needs, intellectual and humanitarian? Or, rather, is man about to take a new grip upon the substance of religion? Is he dissatisfied with the husks, because a new appetite for reality is now possessing him?

These are great questions. Many are asking them. Who is so shallow as not to care how they are answered? Who imagines that it makes no difference in the actual lives of men, in their conduct, in their sense of values, in their peace of mind, in their happiness, courage, and cheerfulness, in the

subsoil of their lives, in their friendships and their patriotism, how these questions are answered, whether in positive or negative terms? Who can dream that the man out of whose life the sense of a living God or the hope of immortality has passed away can be the same as the man who, surveying all life with fearless eyes, rests his soul on a mighty and satisfactory conviction that

“ God ’s in his heaven  
And all ’s well with his world ” ?

This book is sent out in the faith that many readers will be sure to care for the momentous subjects which our age is set to confront and solve. There can be no sound political, social, or economical structure that does not rest on a religious foundation. Upon a score of puzzling problems — about the suffrage, about rights and liberties, about the treatment of the men of black skins and brown skins, about colonies and dependencies, about the place and functions of labor unions, about education, about prisons

and crime, about temperance and the future of the home — we shall not only be likely to build after more enduring plans for having a foothold upon the far-reaching lines of a religious foundation, but, what is even more important, we shall be sure to come to every one of these practical problems with a certain temper and attitude that we could not bring to them without a religion. These questions are to be solved in an atmosphere of courage, hope, confidence, and a large humanity. The shadows around them are dissipated in the light that shines out of a genuine faith in God. The shadows darken in a world where no religion is.

My earliest thinking about religion started with a conviction that seems to me like an axiom. It is, that just so far as religion has any value, it cannot fear the most searching and candid inquiry. How can any reality be hurt by men's questions? Do we fear the test of the assayer's retort for our gold ore? Do we shrink from the art critic's examination of a genuine masterpiece? Do we

need a lawyer's special plea to justify our love for our mothers?

Surely no man understands any subject of human interest and importance unless he knows all its sides and aspects. He cannot be a good engineer without knowing the possibilities of mischief and destruction that lie in his engine and in the force of steam. He cannot be a good pilot and know nothing of the reefs at the entrance to the harbor. As the old proverb says, "Everything has two handles." How can I be sure that I hold the thing by the right handle till I have taken pains to see what the other handle will do? How can a man be permanently happy as long as there remains a supposed skeleton in any dark closet of the house of his thought? What is right? What is true? What view takes in all the facts? These are the questions of the lover of truth. Human action need not be any less earnest, humane, and efficient after once we have shaped our course by asking these questions.

Religion is like every other subject of human thought. What is there against which a plausible case may not be made out? What course of practical conduct is there against which objections may not be urged? There is a very wretched "handle" by which the mind may take up the problem of the world. I hold that we do not know the world till we have taken it by this handle. I take the religious handle, because having tried the other, I find it impossible to hold.

The fact is, men are far more religious than they know. If religion were fear or superstition, we should have to own that the world is outgrowing it. But in that deeper sense of the word "religion," in which it means a universal relation, binding men together and urging them towards unknown ranges of higher development, in which it stands for the perennial sanctions of morality, in which it distinguishes right from wrong and never lets man off from truth and duty — in this sense there is a native religion in every sane and intelligent man. It is my wish in this

little book to show how the higher thought of religion is emerging to-day from the childish vagaries and superstitions of ignorant times. The religion of the great individual thinkers has passed upward through a process of development. The mind of the race is beginning now to pass up through the same process of growth. The growth surely is not from a childish religion to no religion at all. Normal growth should proceed from the religion of children to the religion of grown-up men. I believe that any unprejudiced person who cares to look at all the considerations can come to no other conclusion.

I have written for busy men and women in a busy world. I have therefore endeavored to put the greatest thoughts, the ripe fruitage of the thinking and living of many generations, into the compass of a little book. I do not dare to call this my own thinking. I have listened to the voices of a noble company of thinkers and teachers. What is any modern man but the inheritor of the treasured wisdom of ages? And yet



the more transparently clear this wisdom is, the more easy it becomes to express its essence in a single volume.

Truth, indeed, is always the simplest expression of a fact or a relation; the most natural approach to truth must be the most straightforward—it is only the cause of error which needs circumlocution and ingenuity of defence; whatever is true, being, as it were, in the grain of nature, bears with it all manner of familiar and typical illustrations. Error is out of line with other things. Truth is rich in its likenesses; it ought, therefore, to be easy to set forth; it belongs to the structure of order and beauty. Why should not, therefore, the grandest of all subjects be made attractive and interesting? What have we to do except to describe in the simplest terms those things whose great proportions have already filled our minds with admiration? What if we might get more credit in certain quarters by the methods of a profound obscurity? Our business is not to get credit or praise;

it is merely to tell as many as possible what we see to be true. Are not life itself, and its grand elements, duty, conscience, love, as simple as they are profound?

I am aware that it is venturesome to use the word "theology" in my title. Men may be interested in religion, but can they be interested in theology? I shall try to recall the word to its proper meaning. There is a basis of sound thought in religion. This basis of thought is theology. There is no reason, because the name has been abused, why we should deny the reality. If it has been imagined that theology is for the few, while religion is for the many, I shall try to show that in the true sense a good theology is a necessity to all sane minds. Theology is simply that aspect of religion which appeals to the reason of man, and in fact, by means of this appeal commands his lasting reverence.

It will no doubt be felt that I have given only an outline of the great matters of theology. It has been my deliberate purpose not

to discuss side issues or needless matters of controversy. Let us once agree as to the true point of view; let us settle what the main facts are, and I hold that we shall have lifted our whole subject above the range of controversy. I am aware, however, that in my treatment of the questions of sin, blame, responsibility, forgiveness, and freedom, I have taken ground which, however reasonable and consistent it may be, will appear to many to be very bold and far-reaching in its consequences. To some it may seem to be new and strange ground. I do not care whether my readers call the position new or old. I ask their candid and patient examination, regardless of prejudice, whether the position is not truly and distinctly wholesome, as truth always must be.

I have sought merely to suggest the bearing of the wider and more rational view of the nature of "moral evil" upon the treatment and the teaching of ethics. I believe, however, that it would be a most helpful and profitable task to show how in the religious

philosophy of this essay the great ethical questions about the action of conscience, about duty and responsibility, about the various virtues and the problems of casuistry, about the laws of right and happiness, about the use and application of motives in moral education, all find a noble and inspiring solution.

My treatment of the so-called "freedom of the will" may be misunderstood by those who come to it with the traditional prejudices upon this subject that most men inherit. I believe that the facts, when carefully observed, are as easily demonstrated as was the law of the planetary motion when once Copernicus had enunciated it. As a plausible misinterpretation of the testimony of men's consciousness made them unwilling to accept Copernicus' doctrine that the earth moved, so I believe that a not dissimilar misinterpretation of the inward consciousness at present largely confuses men's thought about the actual working of the human will.

The enunciation of the true nature of

human "freedom," simple and rational as it is by itself, and in accord with our best knowledge, may seem at first to some minds to be a denial of human personality. I have, therefore, endeavored in three consecutive chapters to set forth a true doctrine of human nature, and to show wherein real personality consists, how in the case of man it grows and develops, how majestic and practical a fact it is, and how entirely consistent it is with the most satisfying form of theism. I have tried to show that the line of man's higher growth as a mature and civilized man is through a necessary transition period of self-consciousness, egotism, and selfishness,—a period in which unrest and unhappiness menace the individual and society, in which man suffers conflict without and within, and rarely enjoys real unity, peace of mind, or gladness. True growth rises, through this period of comparative discomfort, upwards to a true personality, like God's, where man's nature at last rests in the stable and gladsome equilibrium of

good-will. I wish to show that there is no real education, whether in the university or in the church, that does not result in this higher personality without the winning of which man's life would be a failure, and the magnificent processes of the universe would come to nought. We shall see that the true doctrine of personality is the secret of what men in every age have known as salvation, happiness, heaven, or eternal life.

The concluding chapters apply the thought of the book by way of easy illustration to certain practical problems of education and conduct. The final test of all thought is, Will it work? It must not only fit together, but it must fit life also. It must be capable of translation into hardy and chivalrous conduct, and it must therefore be practicable in the education of children and in the processes of civilization.

I believe that the time for religious controversy has passed. We have reached a point, through the labor of many thinkers, where we can now see the harmony of

views that once seemed to be contradictory, and can therefore offer a broad and fresh interpretation, both ethical and uplifting, and more satisfactory to the conscience and to the intellect than any previous interpretation. Brought up in the traditions of the religion of early New England, familiar with the tremendous thoughts and searching experiences of a rigid "orthodoxy," going out to live in the larger world where all religions and philosophies compete, the Christianity of my childhood has seemed to take on a grand, beautiful, and universal form, in which no element of sound thought, genuine feeling, or ennobling memory is left out. It is no longer exclusive of aught that has helped men in other forms of faith. It puts up no barriers against the devout Jew, the honest Parsee, the friendly Buddhist or Confucian. If this is a growing world, it is not too much to expect that no form of Christianity since Jesus taught, and no form of theism since men began to think, could be so practical and workable as the new form

which comes to us at the dawn of a new century — the inheritance of all the ages.

It may seem strange to some that I have hardly attempted to make definitions. I have a deliberate reason for this apparent neglect. Little things, matters of detail which have a single aspect, may be defined. The great things, which have many sides and all dimensions, cannot be easily comprised within a definition. Who can define life or consciousness? But we do not any the less know these facts. Mysterious as they are, they are necessary subjects of thought. So with religion; so with our idea of God. We care little for names; we are concerned with the reality —

“ The Somewhat which we name but cannot know,  
Ev’n as we name a star and only see  
His quenchless flashings forth, which ever show  
And ever hide him, and which are not he.”

The largeness of the thought, the infinite variety of the aspects, does not bar us from the most fruitful discussion of those aspects which we know. I have hoped to make my



meaning plain, never by restricting myself to a single definition, but by suggesting through how many forms, parables, illustrations, and partial statements the greatest of subjects must be developed. If I wish to show what love is, I must tell stories of how love acts; I must recite the poems that praise love. In some such varied way we must show what we mean when we name God, or teach religion. I have begun with using these words even vaguely, just as the ideas come to average men. I have not been able to tell at first in what precise sense religion is a reality, and in what sense the word may cover a mere superstition. I have not tried to tell at first what I mean by speaking of God as a person. I can show this better when we come to see what we mean by calling each other persons. Meantime I must run the risk of some slight misunderstanding.

I cannot too strongly urge and emphasize the characteristic test of truth in modern thought and reasoning. . How do we know

a truth when we see it? We know it because it matches, fits, goes into the unity, "makes sense." To match and fit is to be true. But a lie fits nowhere ; it separates, whereas truth binds. It is like the old story of Cain. There is no place where a lie can stay. The universe simply will not receive it. So with all the wrong things. They have no dwelling-place. But the things right and true are fixed in the eternal structure of the world. Their patterns endure.

The sum of truth is not a chain which is only as strong as its weakest link. The sum of truth is a universe in which all things harmonize and each has its place. Do you stand where things tend, as you view them, to make a harmony? This is the test of any man's position as a thinker. Does his view of truth, incorporated into conduct, make toward fullness of life? This is a sort of demonstration that his thinking is right. What is the kind of thought out of which a noble civilization may be con-

structed? This is what the world longs to know.

I have not cared to enter into the old question whether we may see moral or religious truths by "intuition." It is certain that all the material for our thinking comes to us first through the doors of our senses. It is equally certain that we possess an imaginative or constructive faculty whereby we continually translate the raw material of thought into new and higher terms. All science proceeds by the use of this imaginative faculty. Newton watching the falling apple, Agassiz measuring the movement of glaciers, Tyndall studying the passage of sound through a fog bank, speedily passed the material that their senses gave them through the alembic of the scientific imagination, and lo! truths and principles and a certain order of the world disclosed themselves. We use precisely the same faculty of scientific or constructive imagination in regard to morals and religion. We have the same reason for trusting it in

the one place as in the other. It is the same faculty by which the musician makes a harmony or detects discords, which, applied to moral conduct, pronounces one action wrong, that is, dissonant, or out of line, and another action right, fitting, or beautiful.

The plan of the book admits some repetition of the more important thoughts. Such thoughts are like the theme of a symphony: their recurrence ought to serve and not to frustrate the unity of the book.

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I wish to express my hearty acknowledgments of the kindness of my friend Prof. Edward Hale, of Harvard University, who has read the proofs of the book as it has gone through the press.

# THE THEOLOGY OF CIVILIZATION.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE REALM OF DOUBT.

EVERY ONE knows — even children early find out — that there are men and women who profess not to believe in religion. Perhaps these doubters of religion maintain a very respectable character. They have the courage of their convictions, and openly avow themselves to be atheists, materialists, pessimists, or agnostics. They are not always to be taken too seriously: they sometimes doubt or deny the validity of religion for the sake of making an argument; they may even enjoy drawing attention to themselves as peculiar, original, brilliant, and independent people.

Few as the doubters and deniers of religion may be, there are moods of mind and feeling with many of us, when we wonder whether they are not right. There is often a dim and uncomfortable suspicion that if the truth all came out, there would not be any religion. It is vaguely guessed that there are very damaging facts to be urged against the fundamental propositions of religion, against the very existence of God ; or, if he exists, against his goodness, or against the possibility of our knowing anything about him, or having any kind of communion with him. It is surmised that science in her new discoveries about the origin of man and the relation of the body to the mind has brought forward dangerous objections against the immortality of the soul, or indeed against the existence of the soul.

I propose to take an excursion into the realm of doubt. Is it not idle business to stand upon the ground of religion, like men under arms to guard their native land? If the religious view of the universe is true, all

truth belongs to it. The realm of doubt is no foreign or dangerous country, a devil's land that we must beware of; it is a part of the universe. Let us go over and see it; let us traverse it as far as any man can; let us not be in the least afraid of finding wild beasts or other enemies in it. If there are deep forests, let us explore them and open them to the light. Is there any fact in this dark continent that threatens to hurt us? Let us march up to such a fact and interrogate it, and hear what it has to say for itself. Is it possible that any one believes in religion, and yet is afraid of a truth?

It is a fact, at the outset, that everything in this world, so far as the human mind is concerned, is capable of a negative as well as a positive interpretation. Is the sunshine a blessing? But it may kill as well as bless. Is the rain from heaven useful to man? But it may inundate his fields and sweep his buildings away. Is the ocean a mighty highway for the nations? But it also sinks our ships in its waves. Success, money,

praise, honors — all these things may spoil man's character and bring him care and pain rather than happiness. I know of nothing that cannot be translated into terms of negation, of harm, loss, pain, unhappiness. It depends at every turn upon how I use my circumstances and belongings, and what my attitude is toward them, whether I shall call them good or bad. Moreover, I need to know what the chances of mishap are, in order that I may know how to prevent them, or even to turn them into advantages.

It is not strange that the universe itself, or the sum of all things, is likewise capable of a purely negative interpretation. This is the nature of our minds. As there are solutions in the higher mathematics in which you have your choice whether you will write *plus* or *minus* before the answer, so it is with the universe. You can write the minus sign before your answer to the question whether you believe in it, whether you are glad of it, whether in short it is



good. To me, I confess, the universe means more, and not less, in that it is capable of an infinite solution on either side of the line. Am I afraid of this negative solution? On the contrary, I never yet followed it out, and tried carefully to see what it means, without coming back with a new sense of supreme satisfaction to the positive solution, to which I hold that the other is related, as the shadow is related to the light. I am glad of the shadow, infinite as it is. I understand the light the better for seeing it. From the side of the shadow I simply cannot explain the fact of the light. From the side of the light I can see why shadows must be.

Let us suppose, for a while, that the atheist is right, and let us plunge boldly into the gloom of a world of negations. Perhaps it will prove rather pleasant at first. It begins with cool half-lights. There is a sense of having escaped from constraints and conventions; there is some exhilaration at being in new paths, which timid people

have marked as "dangerous." We are free of wearisome customs — for instance, of going to church every Sunday ; we say good-by to the superstitions, ecclesiasticisms, and childish ceremonies that mark the border land between faith and doubt. Where are we now ? We are supposing that it is of no use to pray or to worship God. We are supposing that there is no God. We are trying for a while the experiment of living without any religion. We are assuming that there is no good power in the universe, except such powers of goodness as men develop for themselves. We suppose that matter and force are the only realities that abide. We men are what force, playing on matter, makes us. When the matter changes its shape, when the vital force (whatever that is) goes out of us, there is the end of the man. Why not ?

Possibly we are quite content with this view of the world. We have carried with us for our journey a little supply of provisions that were raised on the other side of the

line. Have we not our character left? we say. Have we not our honesty, our courage, our passion for truth, our kindness, and generosity, our splendid human love and friendship? If we have got rid of any selfish desire for another life, do we not look forward with high hopes of human progress, to which our noble efforts shall be devoted? Let us go back now and report to our friends what a fine country this is which we have explored.

Not so fast. We have only taken a mere holiday excursion into the negative realm. For hundreds of years men have been accustomed to travel far enough to say in their hearts, "There is no God," and to ask, "If a man die, shall he live again?" Ages ago men knew that a blow on the head stopped the life, just as well as they know in these days of microscopes. Who has never contemplated superficial facts that make for the negative interpretation of life? A man has not necessarily thought very far on the negative side in denying "God" and "immor-

talities.” He may have only denied certain misunderstandings of his own about what these words mean. He may not be an infidel at all in declining to say “God.” He must think far enough in his denials to show us what he means by denying the reality of God. Does he really deny that there is any goodness in the universe? Is there no moral structure whatever? Is there no power of any sort that makes for righteousness? These are the denials that we are bound to make in pushing our way into the very heart of the realm of doubt. In other words, the negative interpretation of the universe is tremendously radical. See what you take if you take it at all!

I said that we began with a stock of certain comfortable provisions — virtues, convictions, aspirations, ideals of progress. These things do not grow any longer in the land of shadows. The climate does not suit them; or if they still appear in favored spots, they are like the stunted trees that barely live in the Arctic regions. They survive,

but you will never get fruit from them. Nevertheless, let us see if we cannot march on without them.

We have now got fairly out of the light. We started cheerfully with saying that there is no God — our name for eternal goodness. We are frankly saying now: "There is no goodness at all; there are no standards of any sort visible, of beauty, of harmony, of justice, of truth. There is no duty except each creature's convenience. There is no love except in the terms of the animal world." Tell us why we should be worshipping truth? What is truth, where all things rise and fall, and live and die, as the waves go and come on the beach? Why, in this realm of shadows, must any one take the trouble to seek truth. There is no answer to this question, unless it is a mocking laugh, or an echo. Truth is of the realm of the light, not of the darkness. Truth has no place when you once translate the world into its negative quantities.

We have not merely got out of the region

of religion. We have also got where no institutions, laws, liberties, moralities thrive. These growths follow ideals, faiths, hopes, and without such positive and spiritual leading droop and decay. Life, if healthy, tends always to be positive and assertive; if it ever denies, it must deny for a wider affirmation. But let life once go over altogether to the side of denial, and it fails at its sources. At the last analysis radical denial is death. Translate the universe, then, into universal terms of denial, and all thinking must stop. What is the use in thinking? What is the sense or coherence in it? Why then should we, who have now no convictions that justice is real, struggle and make sacrifices in order to embody justice in laws, constitutions, and bills of rights? And how can we have valid convictions of justice and right, to be wrought into our institutions, who hold that we ourselves are only the resultants of the play of atoms and forces?

What were we saying a little while ago about human progress? We have got

safely beyond all the talk of progress. Progress? Perhaps, for a few centuries, as the wave rises a little higher before it falls back. What is progress, where righteousness, truth, love, duty are only the colors that the insects and birds take on to attract their mates, or to protect themselves from their enemies? What is progress, where the Christs simply die under torture, and where it is a question of a little time before all men will have perished likewise? What is a merely material progress, in view of the burnt suns swinging in empty and meaningless space?

The Saurian creature indeed made progress, if we suppose that he prepared for the coming of a higher order of creatures. The savage made progress, if we suppose that he led the way for the more civilized man. But what progress lies before the civilized man, when faith, hope, love have gone the way of his idols, and the ghastly old age of the race stares him in the face?

There are noble men who are calling for

various economical and political reforms. These reforms are in the line of human progress, they tell us. They ask my co-operation. What shall I do — help them or not? To help them means effort, expense, it may be sacrifice, and unpopularity. Suppose that there is no human progress; why should I help a doubtful or troublesome cause — for workingmen whom I do not know, for people over the seas, for unborn generations? I must believe in something if I take the path of reform; I must think that progress is real and worth while; I must come out of the world of shadows and the *minus* sign, and have some sort of religion; I have no courage or will to reform a meaningless world.

We started with certain fine watchwords for our journey to hearten us on our way. “Let us be honest,” “let us be brave,” “let us have sense,” we said to ourselves as we marched. These watchwords have died out of our ears as we have come to the end of the route. There is just one report to bring



back, when we have seen all and traversed every path that man can follow. Our report is that there is no sense, and no truth, and nothing worth spending human courage upon, in a universe interpreted into negative or atheistic terms. It makes no sense. It is not worth living in. Its logical conclusion is suicide. You could not live in such a world if you tried. The eternal logic of life forbids anything more than an excursion into such a wilderness, or at best a summer vacation spent on its confines.

I said that we could write the *minus* sign before every event of our lives and turn the best things into mischief. Do we therefore do this? On the contrary, we should make fools of ourselves by this sort of interpretation. We make it the business of life, the object of our science, the effort of our energy, the purpose of our thought, to turn all the material of life into forms of good. We learn to control the forces of nature and to compel them to serve us. We find out the uses of poisons and refuse. We learn like-

wise "the moral uses of dark things." We confront disappointment and pain, and wrest a blessing from them. We not only call this practical wisdom ; but we say that this course is true, that is, it is logical, and "makes sense." It tests our courage also. It requires honesty. This course "works," fits, matches, constitutes life. We therefore believe in it. What is truth, except that which makes sense?

Why should we not apply to the problem of the whole the same rule which we apply to the treatment of every part? Here is the vast negative interpretation of the universe which we have contemplated. It is hideous, chaotic, impracticable, senseless, suicidal. Shall we believe it? Shall we adopt it? Not unless we are fools. Not if there is any other possible interpretation of the universe into rational, workable, and harmonious terms. For my part, the negative, atheistic, materialistic interpretation of the world seems good as a foil against which to set off reality. Can it be, I ask, that any mind seri-

ously proposes to erect the mere foil into an idol to worship? I assure him that he would never dream of the foil, if it were not that he had at least caught the image of the reality.

But let us see, granting that we cannot make any sense by being pessimists and atheists, whether we cannot play the part of "agnostics." The agnostic is one who professes that he knows nothing, or has no thought whatever, about the great questions of life and the universe. Whether there is a God or not, whether there is a future life or not, whether we "have souls" or not, whether life is worth living or not, he has no opinion. How can he know? he says. He can wait. This position is rather fascinating to many minds. Let us examine it and see to what it comes practically. We will suppose that the agnostic acts in line with his agnosticism. Let his conduct match his thinking, or, rather, his unwillingness to think. Is his position worthy of a right-minded man? See if it is not rather the position of the shirk or the coward?

The consistent agnostic does not try to make any sense out of life, any reason and harmony out of thought. He stays near the dividing line between the world of light and the world of shadows. He tries to get the advantages of both without the burdens of either. If a man thinks that this is really God's world there are certain momentous responsibilities that fall upon him. He must live as if it were God's world. He cannot venture to do an injustice or tell an untruth. But the agnostic, supposing that he is consistent in his agnosticism, shirks these mighty responsibilities. He does not oblige himself to be too strenuous. We cannot know, he says to himself, whether this is a righteous world or not. But he does not wish other men to live as if there were no good God. The agnostic does not wish other men to give up religion; he does not believe in falsehood, lust, and animalism; he does not even purpose to "look over the edges of things" and to see where atheism and materialism come out. The agnostic

likes to play with ideals, but not to follow them. How many agnostics did you ever see who had taken earnest pains to travel all lengths, and both ways, in the fearless course of their thought?

So much for the ordinary and fairly consistent agnostics, who will neither be religious nor anti-religious, who live and act as their agnosticism requires, living in many cases conveniently decent lives, without faith, hopes, enthusiasms, — moral and intellectual drones, enjoying all the inheritance of the toils and struggles of generations of strenuous and devoted men. Obviously, in a world led by agnostics of such a character human progress would cease.

I have spoken of one kind of agnosticism. It is that of the man who knows nothing of the great problems of life, and acts as if he knew nothing of them. I am aware that the name “agnostic” has also been given to certain stanchly righteous and fearless men, like Mr. Huxley, who loved the truth more than he loved life. In actual conduct and

life Huxley interpreted the universe, not into negative, but into positive terms. Who in all England more obediently followed truth as the supreme reality? Who cared more for practical righteousness? Who more revered the ancient prophetic summary of religion as consisting of justice, mercy, humility? Was any bishop in England a greater idealist than this votary of scientific accuracy and national honesty? Huxley was no atheist or materialist; it is doubtful whether he ought to be called an agnostic, for he lived and acted as one who believed in the moral structure of the universe. His life may be called an heroic struggle in the direction of religion, that is, of the positive interpretation of the problems of life.

The trouble with Mr. Huxley and others of his generation was that there survived in their minds that ancient species of thought known as dualism. They tried to act as if this were a moral universe, as if it were indeed God's world, while they talked and felt as if it were in large measure also the

devil's world. For themselves they were on the side of the forces of righteousness, but they surmised that there was a mighty undertow that ran the way of evil. These men were born too early to be able fairly to interpret the doctrine of evolution.

I wish to make the practical question about agnosticism very plain. This question is not "What do you philosophize about the universe?" but, "What will you do with it?" Will you live in it as if it were righteous, or as if it were evil? When a man lives in it as if it were righteous, that man is a theist in act, if not in belief. When a man lives in it as if it were evil or indifferent, that man, whatever his creed may be, is a practical atheist. Does the church warden or deacon put false wares on the market? He thereby declares that he does not know that there is any God. Does the doubter of all the creeds tell the unpopular truth and turn his back sorrowing upon the church of his childhood, upon his own party, upon the pre-

vailing politics of the nation, for his conscience' sake? He thereby professes his faith in a divine universe. I hope to make this fact plain in the following chapter.



## CHAPTER II.

## THE MORAL STRUCTURE OF THE UNIVERSE.

WE have seen that the mind cannot interpret the world into the terms of denial and doubt. We cannot make righteous, much less, strenuous, conduct match with the thought of pessimism, atheism, or even the mildest-mannered agnosticism. Actual problems of life are always forcing us to face toward a positive and structural conception of the meaning of life.

The truth is, no one needs to offer men a religion. No one can manufacture a religion. Religion is a vital force in man. You can only help to develop and nurture it. Let us see what are the elemental beliefs, which are universally to be found among men and boys not less than among true-hearted women. Imagine, for the sake

of the argument, the hardest-headed man, if only he has kept his soul and life pure. Let him suppose that religion is "only for women." Let him think that he only believes in what he can see, weigh, and measure. See notwithstanding how many profound beliefs in the things "unseen and eternal" this man cherishes.

Does he begin by saying that he believes in matter and force? Be it so. We will hardly stop to remind him that matter in itself is as great a mystery as spirit. We know it by its changes, its activities, its manifestations. But who ever saw, touched, tasted, or handled an atom of it? It is a perfectly tenable theory about matter, that each atom is merely a whirling centre of force. We all believe in matter, in some real sense. Yes. But whoever believes in it, unseen as it is, has no word to offer why we should not believe in God.

And what is force, in which we all so solidly believe? Watch the electric car climbing a hill by the mere touch of the

trolley on the wire. We see what happens. Do we see what does the work? We feel the wind blow, urging our boat through the water. Every one knows that wind is nothing but air in motion. What starts this motion? Why do the atoms dance and whirl? The questions in the Book of Job are no more unanswerable than those which modern science asks. Who shall say that force, in which all believe, may not be the action of the will of God. Surely blind force has no significance.

We believe in money; it is good and desirable. Desirable for what? Why is it good? Is it not because there are values higher than money, which money only symbolizes and serves? What is money, unless it brings human happiness, a purely invisible thing, but more real than gold?

The whole world of business believes in credit. You cannot see credit, but there is no civilized trade or industry without it. Fire sweeps away a man's fortune in a night, as when Boston or Chicago was burned.

The man without a dollar of his own is straightway at work again selling goods or rebuilding blocks of stores. What is this invisible power of credit that gives him the mastery over values and things? It depends on the man's character. And what is character, on which credit rests? There is nothing so intangible, and nothing more real and substantial. The man's limbs, his form, his features are not so much himself as is his character. It is this for which you honor, trust, and love him. See now the elements that make character. They are all invisible; but all men believe in them.

First, there is honesty. Who does not believe in honesty? We must have merchants, cashiers, accountants, manufacturers, upon whom we can rely. Grant that there are too many men who "have their price." All the more necessary is it that there shall be those who are beyond price. There are such men in every city. How honest are the best men whom we know? We may say that they are infinitely honest. A man

is not really honest who could be bought for any number of millions of dollars. The invisible thing, honesty, has an infinite quality in it.

Next, we believe in faithfulness. We must not only have trustworthy treasurers in our savings banks, but we must have an army of men — engineers, switchmen, and others — on whom the lives of millions depend. How faithful must these men be? We say that they must be utterly and infinitely faithful. The engineer must be ready to die for our sakes, with his hand on the throttle of his engine. The switchman must stand like a soldier at his post, however exhausted, in all weathers. Let train robbers ply every art of persuasion, the railroad man must be beyond temptation to betray his trust. This is the kind of faithfulness that we believe in, and actually discover.

We believe also in courage; in the courage of the soldier who scales the heights in the face of flashing guns, in the courage of the lonely picket-guard amid the unseen

perils of the night, in the courage that suffers in the hospital, in the courage of mothers and wives who have ventured all they love best for the cause of their country. We believe no less in the courage of the heroes of peace, in the courage of William Penn founding a Commonwealth in the wilderness and making friends of the savages, in the courage of Elizabeth Fry facing the most hardened men in Newgate Prison for mercy's sake, in the courage of Charles Sumner standing up alone in the Senate Chamber against great majorities, careless of his future, reckless of popularity and reputation, for the sake of the slave. We believe in no hesitating, guarded, measured courage, but in infinite courage, overcoming all things. What man is so much an infidel as not to believe in courage like this?

We all believe in justice. We must have judges for our courts. They hold in their hands the lives of men, the welfare of States, it may be the interests of peace and war.

How just must they be? To ask this seriously is not to be just. The boys at their games know this. How fair must their umpire be? You cannot buy him, bully him, compel him, tempt him, though only a boy, not to render an upright decision. So with the judge. We believe that no earthly consideration, not friendship, not ambition, not party, not even patriotism, must sway him from the strict highway of justice.

We believe in truthfulness. Lies separate men; truth binds them into compact society. You are sending an expert to report upon a mine in the Rocky Mountains. You call an expert into court to help the jury make up their verdict. You bid men of science and ministers of religion tell you the truth. Do you complain that the experts too frequently play you false? This only emphasizes your demand for men of infinite truthfulness. You have no use for any expert who will not tell you "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." Suppose you claim to have no religion

whatever. Suppose the case of Mr. Robert G. Ingersoll himself. Would he have been hired for any value in money, even though under the secrecy of a Gyges' ring, to lie? Would he have professed to be a good Presbyterian for the sake of getting a lucrative government appointment? Would he have told a lie to save his life? Yes or no? Say Yes, and no English-speaking audience would have cared to hear him a second time. Say No, and you have admitted, and Mr. Ingersoll must have admitted, that he believed in things "unseen and eternal." For why should an animal, in a world of mere matter and force, put all material things aside and risk his life for a sentiment? It is because the sentiment is mightier than all visible things. It is because the man who confesses himself to be swayed and bound by his sentiment for truth contains in his soul the invisible structure that binds the universe together.

Again, we believe in that most invisible and undefinable of all things, love. Explain



it away if you can ; write a minus sign before its value ; trace its origin as you like ; it begins, no doubt, in the animal realm where all conscious life begins to show itself. Nevertheless, love moves the world ; nothing is more solidly real. Imagine it out of our lives, or suppose it a dream, and all life is a dream, or worse. But you cannot imagine it out of the world. The rudest man is capable of going to death for his faith in this bed-rock of the universal religion. He has an ideal in his soul of a mother or a wife, so true, so tender, so genuine, that she would give all for his sake. He is never fully a man till he knows that he has in himself this same sort of love. Do you or do you not own to a belief in such love ? Do you believe in love, beyond price, question, fear, measure, — of infinite worth ? If you do, you are avowing a faith that only needs a slight change in language to become exactly what was meant hundreds of years ago, when an unknown writer, doubtless inspired, said, “Now are ye the sons of God.” If man has

such love, it must be because this love is the most characteristic fact of the universe.

We believe not merely in the love of parents, children, friends, kindred, but in a wonderful form of love known as disinterestedness, unselfishness, patriotism, the love of mankind. There must be some men, if not all, devoted to the welfare of their fellows. The great prophets, the heroes, statesmen, reformers, have been men of this sort. What if they got no reward? What if they perished unthanked? They were not serving for pay or ambition, or for their own ease and pleasure.

We believe also in faith. I say faith advisedly. You wish to take a partner into your firm. What sort of a man do you choose? Do you want a man filled with suspicion? He would only do your business harm. You want intelligence in your partner, but you want faith, confidence, a reasonable trust, — trust in human nature, trust in the prospects of your business, of the city, of the nation, trust in human progress and

in the order of the universe. Did you ever see permanent success in any human undertaking that was not carried on and brought to a finish by men of faith? Not even the doubters and the pessimists can argue, discuss, and criticise, except by reason of an elemental faith that there are foundations of truth worthy to be examined and trusted.

Once more, we all believe in hope. It cannot be seen or measured, but is it not a sort of vital function? A man comes into your street to live. Suppose that he carries hope wherever he goes. Suppose that he faces disappointments, reverses and losses, bereavements, and death itself, with this sunny hope. The man adds to the whole neighborhood a rare and valuable quality, believed in by every one.

See now what a splendid list of invisible commodities we all hold precious and firmly believe in!—they are honesty, faithfulness, courage, justice, truthfulness, generosity, love, disinterestedness or public spirit, faith, and hope. These things constitute charac-

ter and make credit. They are not abstract things; they do not exist in the sky, or in some other sphere; they are here and there and everywhere. We believe in them as we believe in matter and force, because we have to deal with them and cannot live without them. But we did not make them or invent them any more than we create electricity or the wind. They are in us, as if something greater than ourselves manifested itself through them in our lives. In other words, they belong to nature or God, and are doubtless the highest and best manifestations of what the universe has to offer to its children. They are surely not material things, and we therefore call them "spiritual."

We must go farther. We not only believe in honesty, and our grand list of spiritual realities; we do not merely believe that they are of a priceless and infinite value; we are persuaded also that we ought, every man of us, to realize these values. There is something akin to a

mighty and universal gravitation upon us, binding and urging us to do every righteous thing; yes, to be honest, faithful, brave, just, generous, — men of faith and love. In so far as we ever resist the movement of this gravitation, this life force, welling up in us with its everlasting “ought,” we feel a kind of pain, like a bodily ache betraying disease. There is satisfaction, like no other satisfaction, whenever our souls give themselves to this invisible motion.

Who is the sceptic that doubts, or knows nothing of these solemn facts of life? Who is it that ever ventures to use the words, “Let us be honest,” “Let us be brave,” “Let us be fair,” “Let us tell the truth,” and does not know that not to be honest, brave, fair, and true is to seek to put our small and separate selves against the will of the universe?

What is the surging sense of the “ought” that we call duty, which one of the greatest thinkers tells us always impressed him like the sight of the starry heavens? Whom

does it not thus impress, who hears its solemn and majestic imperative? Long ago the Greek poet sang about

“ The unwritten laws of God that know not change ;  
They are not of to-day nor yesterday,  
But live forever, nor can man assign  
When first they sprang to being.”

Whether or not the intelligence always sees truly, whether or not it possesses all the facts upon which to make up its judgment in each case as to what is right, whatever changing forms right takes from generation to generation, as intelligence grows clearer, at least the pressure to obey the right, so far as men see it, is a fundamental fact of our being. Show us what is right, and we all agree that we ought to do it. We call such a fact as this “universal,” meaning that it is of the universe; it rises out of the nature of things.

We easily say this. But to say as much as this is to say that we believe that this is a moral world, that its structure is righteous.

There is not and cannot be any universal "ought" in a world of mere matter and force. But this is a world where the "ought," being with us and in us, swaying us its everlasting way, cannot be set aside or cast out. This must therefore be a spiritual universe. Religion dwells with this sense of "ought," is bound up with it, grows out of it.

We go farther yet in the beliefs of our common religion, agreed to by all men whose opinion deserves respect. The world has seen men, every nation that has a literature has produced men, every village of any civilized land has in it men and women, who have actually combined in themselves the grand qualities in which we believe. We will not take Jesus' case now; we will leave it aside, lest some one might say that it was exceptional. We will not insist that those whom we praise have been perfect and flawless. We only say that men and women have walked this earth who have been honest, faithful,

fearless, just, sincere, large-hearted, full of faith and hope. Could you buy or bribe them? Could you frighten or compel them? Never. They did the right, some one says, because it would bring them praise or a reputation. But many are those who have followed the right when duty was unpopular, in the teeth of risks, when society expected and desired conduct of an entirely different sort. Did Isaiah and Amos tell the truth because their contemporaries thanked them for telling it? Did Lord Shaftsbury take up the cause of the children of the poor because society would flatter him for his services? Did Wilberforce go to the rescue of the slave because this promised the rewards of ambition? Here were men who stood in advance of their times. The human currents set the opposite way to their course. They stood often alone, in the face not of praise, but of curses. Is there any doubter who does not believe in the splendid procession of the lovers of liberty and of righteousness, in



certain great Hebrew names, in Confucius, in Buddha, in Epictetus and the Stoics, in William of Orange, Sir Thomas More and Washington, in Channing and Martineau and Tennyson? As well discredit the Parthenon, the Dresden Madonna, the plays of Shakespeare, the symphonies of Beethoven!

It has sometimes been said that religion was founded in superstition and fear. Men worship and pray in dread of the unknown powers about them. Grant that this is a possible interpretation of a good deal of the religion that one sees in the world. Grant whatever one cares to show on this side. There remains a religion that has cast out all fear. It acts not from dread of hell or even from the hope of heaven. It is like a vital and instinctive force in those whom it possesses, pushing its way in the dark as in the light.

Where do these men come from in whom we instinctively believe as soon as we see them? Do they make themselves? They seem to me to be the fruitage of the

universe. "Here," says nature (or shall we not say God?), "here is my handiwork, a specimen of what I purpose to do; here is a true and veritable man — a child of the universe. In him know the nature from which he sprang, coming to light in his deeds and his face! Do you like my fruit? Do you believe in my children? Believe then in me." How could we help believing, we answer, if only we could see more of this kind of fruit? "This is what I am about," the reply is. "Obey my laws, yield to the life forces moving you, and the world shall be filled with similar fruitage."

Observe now what a treasure of veritable religion every man carries with him. He may hardly recognize it; he may be far from living up to it; he may think that it is only the people in churches who do not "live up to their religion." He may boast that he believes merely in the things which he sees. But when you interrogate him, he proves a believer in character, in righteousness, in unseen ideals, in duty, in some

majestic Power greater than man, greater than the biggest majorities, greater than all the men in all ages, that urges him to duty. He believes also in the men who live up to their ideals, and do right in "scorn of consequence." Whatever wrong he may do himself, he does not believe in men who live like beasts, but in men who actually live as the sons of God. Am I not right in calling this grand series of beliefs a religion and in asserting that men are religious by nature? Am I not right in claiming that among all thoughtful men there is a belief, growing strong with years and experience, in the facts of a moral structure in the universe? Bear in mind also that the word "moral," if not the word "universe" itself, is not a material term, but describes what we call an eternal and spiritual reality.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE WORLD OF OPPOSITES.

IT seems very hard to escape the conclusion of our last chapter. But the way of dualism now opens. I have already referred to it as an old and well-known track of thought. It undertakes to interpret the universe as at the same time structural and refractory, religious and diabolical. If there is a moral nature within us, is there not outside of us a realm of things quite unmoral? If there is a power that makes for righteousness, does not that power often seem to be fatally thwarted? May this not then be a sort of twofold world, as the old Persians conceived it? May there not be two powers or sets of powers in it? Is there not as much reason for believing in a devil as in God?

We have here dualism, or the world of opposites. This form of thought has appealed to the imagination and has attracted bright and noble minds. It largely prevails in the world to-day. It doubtless fits a certain state of human development; it suits minds that are themselves passing through a transition period of their growth, and whose own lives are in conflict. I have suggested that Mr. Huxley was not so much an agnostic as he was a dualist. He was puzzled as he stood in the presence, as it seemed to him, of the two antagonistic forces of good and evil. He tried to believe in them both. His temperament, his education, the prevailing influences of his generation, tended to strand him upon the rocks of a tremendous dilemma.

I wish briefly to show why it is becoming impossible to take any double conception of the universe. In the first place, every item of knowledge of the outward world goes to show that its structure throughout is one, and not two. We can easily trace the two-

fold conception of the universe to its beginnings in men's first imperfect observations of natural phenomena. We can see that early men must have begun with thinking that there existed, not good powers alone, making the sunshine and sending harvests, but malignant powers also, covering the earth with storms, winter, and night, and sweeping life away.

Slowly and steadily the mind of man has been pushed from the last vestige of consistent belief in twofold warring forces in the world without. Storms, winter, night, death even, have their orderly place in the course of nature. We would not seriously wish them away any more than we wish the sunlight or the summer away. What modern man can believe that the whirlwind, the lightning, or the fever is ever sent in anger? The thought is growingly incongruous with all that we know. Whether or not a man sees goodness in nature, it is impossible to believe in good and bad powers at war with each other. There would not

even be a universe or a constituted order, if any malign power were constantly bursting through the order and breaking it up. The plain meaning of the word "universe" is a world-order, including all things within it.

The fact is, man is every day finding new uses for things that he once cursed—of animals, of soils, weeds, and trees, of powers of nature. The area of what he calls good is always being enlarged. What sort of a Satan or Ahriman is it whose works only need to be studied and handled, and lo! they are transformed into good?

Take, for example, barbarous men's thought of the mountains and forests. These were places unfriendly to man. The mountains were the abode of the dreadful deities who hurled the thunderbolt; the deep and gloomy woods were thick with dangers. Contrast with this early feeling of our forefathers the delight with which Alpine and Appalachian climbers seek out a way of approach to the most inaccessible heights, while thousands go to spend their holidays

amidst the hills and in the depths of the woods. The mountains have become our friends. They gather the rainfall for our fields; they lift up their snow-clad heads for our rest and joy. The forests are our treasure-houses; we tremble to let the ruthless hands of man sweep them away.

Moreover, there is really no sound philosophy in thinking that both good and evil wage war for the rule of the world. Is it eternal war? Are the two powers, order and chaos, balanced against each other for ever? Not even the Persians thought this. They believed that Ormuzd, the good power, would win in the end. The fact is, that if goodness is infinite, evil cannot be infinite; it must be limited and finite. This corresponds to all that we know of the facts of the world. The things that endure, the mysterious atoms, the moving forces, the universal laws, the flow of life, the light traversing space, — these are never called evil. But whatever we call evil is well named “accident.” Not that it is outside



of the realm of law, but it passes by, and ceases, and is no more. The whirlwind cuts a swath across the prairie, but there is nothing malignant in its mighty energy. You look again presently, and the one enduring fact is the growing, healing life of nature. The whirlwind itself is the manifestation of life.

We saw that honor, truth, justice, love, possess an infinite value. In all times, and all spheres, we conceive that these values hold. But what is so finite as selfishness, greed, dishonesty, and falsehood? They bring their own doom of futility. Complain as you may of the existence of evil, whether outward or moral, more and more it comes to be in the power of man to determine whether it shall do him the slightest harm. More and more frequently do the men appear who set it at nought, and turn it into the service of good.

Again, this twofold idea of the world is a menace to good morals. True, it has sometimes been splendidly used. Men have

been stirred to grapple with evil, as if indeed they fought not merely with flesh and blood, but "with principalities and powers and the world-rulers of darkness." This made mighty fighters as long as fighting was the order of the day. But it made hate also; it discouraged sympathy; it always set a great host of men under the ban and wrath of God, enemies of the good. It split men into struggling sects. Cursing was answered back with persecution. War engendered war. Did humanity grow in the hearts of the men who chanted the maledictory psalms?

The new need is of men who have all the courage and the patience of the fighters, but who shall use their splendid qualities for something better than fighting. As the best skill of the physician is positive rather than negative — to raise the level of the health, to quicken the sluggish circulation, to nourish the life forces and make them stronger than disease, yes, to flood out disease with a more ample life, so in the moral realm the new

rule of victory is to uplift, to help, to "overcome evil with good." This is the mightier way ; it can be demonstrated that it is by far more efficacious.

The twofold or dualistic conception of the world now stands in the way of this higher method ; it has become outgrown, and must pass away. We can tolerate no longer any scheme of things that separates men into the good and the bad, the saved and the lost, friends and enemies. If God is almighty and therefore has no enemies, his children have none. If meanwhile some are bad, then all are liable to the same malady, which calls for pity and cure. If some are good, then all have it in them to be good too. The conditions which surround us are universal conditions. Why is it that no modern man can tolerate the idea of an eternal hell? It is because dualism is incompatible with a moral universe. Its doctrine that evil stands off by itself, exceptional, outside of the universal order, enduring forever, no longer fits the neces-

sities of righteous men's thought. Why indeed should any righteous man think the universe to be less truly whole-hearted and sound than he is himself? If the man has learned in some measure to bring all things that happen to him into unity, why should he not believe in a universe, wherein all things likewise are brought into the unity of good?

Again, the idea of a world of struggling opposites once seemed indeed necessary to explain certain things such as disease, pain, and sin. But there is no economy any longer in using this explanation. There is a better and higher way of accounting for the seeming struggle in life; there is no need of bringing in rival deities, or serpent tempters. In fact, the idea of a world of actual opposites merely serves to appease the questions of children; it confounds the adult intelligence at the outset. You cannot possibly admit to your thought a world forever in conflict with itself, part good and part bad. You can believe in the light that casts shadows in

the course of its doing the work of light. You cannot believe in the light as efficient and real, and imagine that the shadows are equally real. Give us more light and you banish the shadows. Take away all light, and the very word "shadow" has no significance; its only meaning is more or less absence of light. I shall presently try to set forth a conception of the universe which makes dualism of any sort as needless as it makes materialism inconceivable.

Are there readers who still wonder whether there is any use in thinking about the mighty problems of life, the universe, and human destiny? Is it not enough, they perhaps ask, to perform our tasks like men, and not to ask questions, much less to dream of finding an answer? No matter what kind of a world it is, whether good or bad, ruled over by Goodness, or swinging its way to blind death for all, nevertheless, it is good, we are told, to do well, to be just and merciful, to leave the world better for our living.

In other words, it is good to act and live ex-

actly as men would act and live who believe that goodness and love are eternal and universal. If it is good to act thus, I submit to any rational mind, is it not good to think thus, and to feel thus? Is it good to act thus, even though no truth corresponds to such an ideal of life? Then is it not good, and far better indeed, to act thus when we have found out that our ideals of such life spring from reality? Is anything good, if nothing is real? Is not our faith in the right life grounded in a deeper faith, that the right life matches with a righteous universe? That right life and right thought and right feeling are one? Does it not hearten us to the right life when we see that the right life is ours because first it is God's? That it only comes to us because it shines out of the life of the universe? Surely it must be as good as it is necessary candidly to ask the grand questions which follow. I believe that the answers that press back on our minds are as hopeful as the problems themselves are august.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THOROUGH-GOING THEISM.

THERE is a theology that fits barbarous minds. It is the first attempt of primitive men to understand the world in which they find themselves. It matches with barbarous manners, customs, emotions, and conduct.

There are theologies that fit the minds of men in their various stages of progress upwards from barbarism. The theology, that is, the thinking about the mysteries of life and death, is in each case something of a reflection of the mind of the people of the age. It matches their civilization; it is not and cannot be far beyond their manners and morals, their science, their ideals and aspirations. If they are coarse and sensual, if they are selfish and avaricious, if they are a military people and hate their enemies, the

theology that fits them has always had, and must have, sensual, selfish, and inhumane elements. Their God will be a God of war. Their heaven will be for their own indulgence, and a hell will be provided with ample room for their rivals and enemies.

There is a theology also that fits civilized men. There have appeared from time to time, in human history, beautiful natures, men of justice, peace, and sympathy, the first fruits of humanity. Such men have risen above the level of their times and forecast a theology that represented the ideals, the customs, and the conduct of mature and all-round men, of a perfect society. Are we nearer to true civilization than our carousing and quarrelsome forefathers? Do we begin to catch sight of what a true civilization will be? Do groups of men already appear, like the spring flowers on the hillsides, gentle in their manners, broad and universal in their sympathies, devoted to truth, to justice, to the welfare of mankind? If so, we must have a theology, that is, a



way of thinking about the universe, of interpreting its mysteries, of answering the ancient master-question, — What is the chief end of man? This theology must certainly be quite different from any of the theologies that have prevailed in the past. If there is any use in thinking at all, if there is any reality in religion, there must be a theology that fits and expresses the life of civilized men.

There are plenty of reasons why the attempt to frame a rational thought of the universe has hope and promise in it, which the best of men until lately would have had to forego. How could Athanasius, Augustine, Calvin, or Jonathan Edwards have fitted a humane theology upon the religion, the institutions, and the barbarous traditions of an inhumane society, in an age of rampant militarism? Jesus could proclaim a beautiful religion of trust, and hope, and charity. But how could Jesus have altogether freed his own mind, and much more the minds of his contemporaries, from the old paralyzing conception of a world of demons and hell-fire?

It is only lately that science has worked out the marvelous parable of the outward universe. How could the noblest religious thinker quite shake off the trammels of the ancient dualism, while as yet the world about him seemed the theatre of the warring forces of Ahriman and Ormuzd?

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the world found itself entering upon a period of remarkable growth, as when the boy emerges into the man. It was the era of a new industrialism, of wonderful inventions, of the control of inexhaustible forces, as if men were learning to share power with the Creator. It was an era of the accumulation of undreamed wealth. Commerce was binding nations together. Ideals of democracy and human brotherhood were in the air. Science was about to show that the rocks under our feet were of one substance with the stars. A new pity was visiting prisons, seeking to save outcasts and slaves. With every throb of humanity came the pressure for a religion to fit humane men. Who could now

be satisfied with a religion of dreary sabbaths and long prayers, a religion that pronounced every child to be conceived in sin and born under God's wrath, a religion that doomed the vast majority of mankind to eternal torment?

The liberal movement in religion has naturally gone altogether in advance of any organization to embody it, much less of any system of thought to interpret it. The first effect of the milder atmosphere, in fact, has been simply to disintegrate the old theologies. Multitudes of sceptical people are in the most orthodox churches. They have a hungry instinct for religion, with suspicions that truth and religion are at odds. Every community has its agnostics who confront the mysteries of life and death with a pathetic stoicism. The societies of ethical culture are trying to organize a religion of humanity without any theology. What denomination or organized form of faith is ready to set forth the religion of the future? Ask leading laymen and ministers. How

many of them are satisfied, heart and soul and mind, with their religion? How few of the brightest young men and women in the universities are able to give an intelligent account of their religion in the face of sceptical, agnostic, or materialistic companions! How many of them have ever seen the way to meet their own doubts? There was never so great a demand for a theology for civilized men. The duty of the age is that every man who sees, or thinks he sees, the beautiful proportions of religious truth, shall tell his vision. Let all tell it who can.

I am aware of the odium that just now attaches to "system-makers." There is not a supporter of conventional and antique creeds who will not cast a slur upon the possibility of any unified thinking in religion. The dualistic conception of the world, that suited mediæval society and matched its manners and morals, subtly survives in minds that have adopted the terms of modern science. "It is a world of mystery," men say, "of opposites and antinomies. Lo!

The opposites each contain a truth." Did not many praise Mr. Kidd's strange antithesis of faith and reason? Men are to-day actually adopting incongruous, irreconcilable, and quite unassimilable thoughts, precisely as their forefathers admitted irreconcilable deities into their pantheon. When the domain of truth is thus handed over to the worship of irrationality, for what grotesque vagary or childish superstition may we not be invited to make room! Let us not fear then at the outset to discredit chaotic or nebulous thinking. Let us not be alarmed at the boldness of our venture. A civilized theology is simply the application of straight and fearless thinking — the characteristic method by which all civilization has proceeded — to the deepest and most practical problems of human life. Let us not be frightened, if we think ourselves the makers of any system of thought. Let us not be frightened by any one, if we simply discover the order and unity which, whenever seen, satisfy our souls.

Our theology begins in an act of faith. This is the beginning of all philosophy, or rational thinking. We have a natural bias for order and construction. This is the nature of mind. We instinctively trust that things go together to make a unity. Our faith is that there are no real antinomies, that there can be no contradictory truths, but that every movement of thought is towards an ultimate harmony. To say that this is a universe, means that all things in it match, fit together, make order, and find significant interpretation in terms of thought. We have no absolute demonstration of this magnificent proposition so as to silence scepticism about it. But as soon as we open our eyes, Nature gives hints of design or structure, and we henceforth follow straightway the lead of our faith. The clearer the mind the more imperative is its native and characteristic demand to find unity. We cannot easily think that this demand does not point toward reality. If the world is a universe,

why should it not tend to mirror itself thus upon our minds? We go forth to examine it, and it answers to our faith in it.

We also have a faith — it is a faith of the intellect — that truth is good and will be good to eternity. This faith is not a demand for our own comfort; it is another form of the demand for order and unity. It is doubtless rooted in experience, but it always transcends experience. Truth and good somehow belong in the same category. I think them together, as I think two and two into four. If they did not belong together, the universe would break apart, and constructive thinking would cease.

It is a matter also of faith that religion and reason are one. How could we know it in advance? I am glad to confess that I have an instinctive bias that way. It is the mark of reason, not of insanity. Two and two cannot make four elsewhere and make five in religion. Chaos and chance cannot be an affront to our intelligence elsewhere, and become beautiful in religion. If the

elements tell the truth under our hands in the laboratory, we cannot believe in a religion that works magic with the same elements, — that bids water, for instance, call itself wine.

Let us frankly admit faith, that is, trust or confidence, to be a life element that we cannot get on without. As fruitful thinking in every other direction proceeds from a faith or bias in favor of order and construction, so the thinking of theology must proceed with the same kind of bias or faith in favor of finding harmony, reason, goodness, at the centre of things. We must either choose a positive belief out of which all sane and constructive thought proceeds, or a belief with the minus sign, which, as we have seen, is intellectual suicide. The feeblest demand for religion, once thought out, thus becomes the demand for a religion so beautiful, so comprehensive, so rational, as to match and fulfil all the requirements of civilized men. My wish is to show, or at least to suggest, how the



facts of life at once correspond to and substantiate our inborn confidence in their constructive value.

I have intimated that the key to our most mature thought of religion is in the doctrine of a universe. To believe in a universe is to believe in theism, that is, in a good God. See if this must not be so. If we live in a universe at all, then everything enters into the unity. There cannot be two substances, mind and matter, as men once thought, the one more or less refractory or even in opposition to the other. There cannot exist together in a universe two opposing principles of good and evil, balanced against each other. There cannot be any room for independent and creative wills, actually thwarting the Good Will.

If we say unity, however, we mean spiritual and not material unity. The significant fact in all the world is spirit. We mean by this the real and eternal things,—force, intelligence, law, will, life,—all of them unseen. To say the words “order,” “unity,” “good-

ness," is so far to speak in terms of spirit. The unseen Reality, then, behind all things visible — the force, the intelligence, the creator of beauty, the ruling Will — is spirit.

We have a hint of this truth in our consciousness. The significant facts about ourselves are all interpretable into the terms of thought and emotion. These terms, such as duty, happiness, love, describe not matter, but spirit. Our true life is invisible. The body and its functions only serve and express the man's inner self. His own unity or personality is not in bodily parts, but beyond sight and touch. We only say of the universe what we say of ourselves.

Is not the body, however, alien to the spirit? Do not matter and spirit, even though beside one another in the same universe, belong to different realms? We surely do not intend to rule out any facts, or to wipe out the conditions upon which life actually goes on. We merely say that matter and spirit cannot be alien to each other. The old motto *Mens sana in corpore*

*sano* expresses the law and the fact. What modern man can deny it? At his best, body and soul, man's form and his substance, are one.

All modern science has been impressing this lesson upon us. The elements of matter, says science, march together and coördinate, like so many divisions of one vast host. They go in order, number, and proportions. They are translated into terms of a common mathematical notation. There is nothing refractory about them in the eye of intelligence. Savage men thought them at war with each other. Childish thought conceived them as an encumbrance to spirit, hostile to goodness. We have assured ourselves that among all their countless atoms lurks no contrary force or disobedient will. No Satan or devil in any corner of the universe ever swerves one of them from its orderly course. The old Greek doctrine of bodily harmony perfectly illustrates what we mean. All the poets tell us the same :

“ Nay, what is Nature’s  
Self, but an endless  
Strife toward music,  
Euphony, rhyme?

“ Trees in their blooming,  
Tides in their flowing,  
Stars in their circling,  
Tremble with song.

“ God in his throne is  
Eldest of poets;  
Unto his measures  
Moveth the whole.”

Shall we ask now the child’s question, Who made matter? And the question that follows, Who made God? Is any one not yet ready to use this word “God”? How then came this marvelous universe, traversed by light, illuminated with intelligence, throbbing with life, dominated as if by a single will? These questions urge us into a region of lofty thought, where time and space seem to pass away. It is given to man to think of eternity, to make valid distinctions between the finite and the infinite, to rest in nothing less than the conception of *uncaused*

*reality.* That which really is, we say, never began. That original Being out of which all life sprang, dwells in no temples made with hands, dwells in no starry heaven, and yet is wherever its manifestations are, its Words, its creations, its children. Grant for a moment the reality of infinite being, and we begin to conceive that all things are held from eternity in the eternal mind. To us they seem to unroll. To the infinite thought, past and present and future are one.

At our highest, we men experience something of this stretching of our thought into the dimensions of eternity. In the hours of the largest insight we live in the lives of our children, we outrun their present mistakes or pain, we foresee their entrance into the universal plan, we rest content for ourselves and for their sakes. The drama of life goes on, the panorama rolls by, we seem to see for the time, somewhat as the Eternal may see, the unity which brings every detail of the procession into significance. We, too,

are not dwellers in the body alone, much less in a single vital organ. We go where our messages travel; we are dwellers in the universe, and citizens everywhere. Such experiences are not wild hallucinations of the senses. They are sane and intelligent, such as might be expected by men, the characteristic of whose existence is in spiritual terms, who on any rational theory must be children of the universe, that is, akin to its forces, at one with its life, in accord with its thought.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE GOOD GOD.

LET us grant that there is an ultimate reality which constitutes our world a universe, which is essentially spirit, whose visible form and expression we call matter. What forbids us from naming this reality God? The only hindrance is the traditional doubt, inherited from the days of man's animalism and his childish and savage state, whether the unseen Power is altogether good. I for one cannot think at all and think anything else. Must I confess, driven by the facts of the world, that I see about me force, intelligence, order, beauty, unity? I must add Goodness, being led by an instinctive and overpowering sense that this follows. The truth is, we cannot conceive of intelligence, and especially an intelligence that leaps into

forms of rhythm, music, order, and beauty, and not think that such an intelligence is good. Not to be good is to be irrational, futile, and hideous.

We have seen that our world must be significant, or there is no philosophy about it. But the only philosophy that is significant is a philosophy of beneficence. Set this aside and you have set aside rational thought. The demand of our minds to find moral harmony or purposive goodness is exactly the same as is the demand to find order and unity. There is the same evidence for the one fact as for the other: they belong together. The superficial appearances are at first against both of these demands.

Or again, here in our world the beauty of goodness, the infinite smile of love, actually appears. It appears in men at least. It gleams in the eyes of mother birds and of faithful dogs. It is the highest reach of intelligence, the most spiritual thing in the universe. Where does it come from? The



short answer is that it comes from the heart of nature. It is the manifestation of the mind of God.

Schopenhauer has given the world a philosophy of will. But will in itself has no significance. What kind of will is it? we ask. Is it self will? We men know how irrational self will is. Is it blind will? That is no better than electricity. The animals exhibit a higher form of will than that. Is it ill will? That is foolish and chaotic. Why then must it not be good will?

Let us be bold now and assume, at least provisionally, and till some one can do better for our thinking, that good will is at the heart of the universe. Call it love, if you prefer, as the mystical writer in the New Testament calls it; call it God. The names are one. Start, if you must, from the viewpoint of utter scepticism, and call this thought of God as Good Will merely a working theory. You will find it the only working theory from which you can make constructive thought. If you use it at all,

however, use it consistently and for all it is worth. Let it take you wherever it leads. Time enough to break with it when we run against the walls of contradiction or absurdity. Till then it will not hurt us. But what if it prove to be "the way of life"?

Let us grant that the good will is infinite; let us admit that beneficence must be its far-reaching design. Let us say of God's goodness that "as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his thoughts higher than our thoughts and his ways higher than our ways." Measure the love of a mother for her child, of a just man for his honor, of a patriot eager to die for his country, of a Christ's love for the suffering, and say these are but sparks of his goodness; out of his abundant life they shine. If we believe in God at all, this is what we believe. If we say the name of God even provisionally, this is what we must mean.

Let us search farther and see what we mean by saying God. We mean that there is joy in the depths of being, as befits a victo-

rious love. We mean that there is peace, as befits a Good Will that has its perfect satisfaction. Joy and peace are spiritual facts, like will, intelligence, and love. Shall we add the contrast of suffering, and say that the Eternal Life in a real sense bears pain? It is bold to say, but we are driven to say it, for pain, at least in the sense of sympathy, is a part of the unity of life. There is no love without suffering. This fact does not come from our human ignorance and incompleteness. It is of the nature of love at its wisest, and even when it foresees a victorious end. The mother suffers with the falls of her child, needful as these falls are. Who would wish it otherwise? Who would cast out the law of pain from his own life? This would be the diminution of the flow of life. It would deny the reality of love. Who would worship an impassive God? How could infinite love, then, escape the law of its own nature? or, how could God's love be less complete than human love?

In calling God one, we have not ruled out

the principle of the manifoldness of life, contained within the divine unity. We believe in no lonely deity. Let us use the terms, if you please, of the Hegelian trinity, making sure that it was never the trinity of ecclesiastical history. Here is the subject and the object, and a relation binding them together. In other words, here first is God, the fountain of life; here next is the object and end of his beneficent life in his children, in his sentient and intelligent creation; and here again is what we know as the visible world, the link and medium of communication between God and man. And yet these forms of life must exist together in the divine mind. The separation is only with us and for our sake; it is the mark of our incompleteness. Beneath the infinite variety, the contrasts of light and shade, the distinctions, sometimes world-wide, or again subtle and delicate, whereby we know things apart, we catch sight of the ultimate fact of oneness throughout.

I have intimated that the outward nature

is a parable. Let us try this method of comprehending it; for it is this method that especially fits the thought of an ideal or spiritual universe. When we say that nature is a parable, we mean that it constitutes a sort of language, through which the mind of God is manifested. This was doubtless what men meant under the name of Revelation. As at the best a man's body expresses his thought and his will, and fitly clothes his spirit, so the outward world expresses the life that dwells behind it. If this is so, we can see why nature is neither moral nor immoral in itself. I take up a beautiful love story; for instance, *Adam Bede*. The book, as I read it, touches every chord in my nature. But the letters and the pictures in the book have no more moral quality than the inky types from which they were printed. There are pictures in the book that, taken by themselves, are ugly and distressing. They are none the less needful to the author's meaning.

So with nature, the grand and single

question is the interpretation of the book as a whole. Is it a love story? Then I am happy, even if the story of true love fails to run smoothly. Nay, I do not see how it could have been a story of love at all if this love had nothing interesting, thrilling, inspiring, to accomplish, if there were no progress in the story. The telegraph language is a succession of strokes and breaks. Could there be language without these varying intervals, without a law of contrast and rhythm? Could the eye know the teaching of light and color, without shadow and darkness? Could God teach us then to know beauty in a world where visions of ugliness were never seen; to know order and harmony where there was never the semblance of chaos; to hunger and thirst after goodness, in a world where the body never could suffer hunger and thirst; to "love mercy and walk humbly with God," in a world where no sight of cruelty or vain show or lordly pride was ever witnessed? No! If the universe tells a story at all, it must tell

a significant story. I, for one, will not reject my book of life, because, beside hymns and prayers, it has tragedy also. I will not complain that it has many and various chapters. I will not quarrel because the scale of the story is colossal, nor because there are chapters of the book written in blood and tears, nor because the beginning is in the pangs of birth and the pains, hurts, diseases, and struggles of childhood. The question is, Is it a love story from God to man? Then the scale of the story and its marvels of incident and progress seem to me worthy of its author. I have a clue now to make the whole story beautiful. I would not dare to leave out a chapter. Aye, who of us really dares to leave out a page of his own life story?

We are able now to modify and so better to understand the idea of the divine omnipresence. Men say that God is everywhere. But there is a pantheism that revolts us, as there is also a noble and inspiring pantheism. We do not mean, when we say that God is

in nature, that he is everywhere in space and time the same, that all of God is everywhere manifest in visible and tangible things, that we see God as plainly in the rock or the thunder or the tiger as we see him in the face of the Madonna. This is the irrational pantheism. We have seen that nature could tell us no message at all, except by our recognition of differences of more or less, greater and smaller, beautiful and repulsive. The story does not run on a level, but it progresses in interest. A civilized age ought, therefore, to exhibit God more completely than was possible in the ages of savagery.

To make this clearer, let us suppose that the end and aim of God is to communicate to his children of his own fullness. What we are made to long after is the complete revelation of God, not power alone, nor power and mind and beauty, but beneficence also. The teaching of the outward nature, with its meager manifestation of God, becomes therefore a constant spur and incentive to go to the heart of things and know



all. Why are we dissatisfied with the revelation of God's power in the storm? It is only a single aspect of God. Why is the wild beast, the tiger, or the lion, though quite unmoral, repulsive to us? Is there nothing of God in his superb strength, or his cunning intelligence? Where else does it come from? The wild creature is a parable to us of what a little power or a narrow intelligence is, without good will to order it. Why is the toad ugly to us? The naturalist surely finds something to admire in it. It is ugly to us because there is ideal beauty of form, with which the ungainly shape of the toad is contrasted.

The broken limb of the tree fades and decays. It is a parable of the perennial need of every branch of the human vine to keep in perfect touch with its stem; that is, with the life of God. How could we know anything of God, if he were alike in all things and at every moment? There is not an area of desert and drought on our planet, there is not a scene of pestilence or famine,

there is not a pest or blight, there is not a story of shipwreck, that does not repeat the single refrain, that we do not know God till we know him in all his perfectness and in the unity of his goodness. We have already learned, on the side of our science, that what we call evil in nature is part and parcel of the universe. The spiritual doctrine, matching our science, is that the evil in nature is so much picture language through which man, the growing child, comes to understand his father's message. It fits the state of the child. As he grows in his understanding of the message, the evil disappears in the unity of the story.

Does the sum of evil in the world seem too great? But who is to judge, if a law of contrasts exists, how strongly marked the contrast must be? It must match the need. If love is the greatest thing in the universe, let us not complain if by all means, however stupendous, it is made clear that not to love is to die. Who rebels because, when God makes clay to live, and breathes into it the

breath of spiritual life, he requires it to obey his own mighty law of effort, cost, and pain?

The master thought of evolution confirms what we have said. The picture presented to us is a universe in process of growing. It matches the fact of man, a being who grows. The early æons of the life of the universe display the titanic working of force. There is nothing moral in the scenes of the carboniferous period. Yet from the first moment of the process, not death, but active, ascending, throbbing life is their great characteristic. If there is fear, there is joy too, as the great prehistoric animals sport in the forests. Fear and hunger and pain are the spur to joy and life. Once grant that men worthy to be called "sons of God!" are coming into this wild, brute world, and there is no waste to complain of. The outward conditions grow mild as fast as man attains his manhood. The more fully he learns his lesson of God's infinite goodness, the less does he fear any outward evil. More and more he gains control over

the forces of the universe, and commands them to do his will. As fast as he proves himself the son of God, he makes the whole universe his home, and walks erect as its master. This is law and fact. Let David Livingstone, walking up and down the unknown wilderness of the Dark Continent, fearless and joyous, bear witness to this.

I may have seemed to speak as if the outward universe were only in thought, an ideal, but quite unreal world. I have not meant to say this. I know nothing more real than the realm of the spirit. I conceive of matter as simply the form of spirit. But the form is real. The last thing that I imply is that we can think the universe and its conditions away by force of will. They inhere in the mind of God. They are truthful conditions, upon which we depend. There is no magic by which we can make believe that our bodies are dreams, or set aside physical laws. The forces of the world, its laws, the whirl of its atoms, all these, despite Christian Science, are held fast in the eternal mind.

We come now to the nature of man. What characterizes him as man? All that characterizes God as spirit, characterizes man. There is in man, as in God, that which knows and loves and wills, revealing itself in outward form and expression. The reality is invisible. We never see our friend's real self. We only see him in what he does. This is the way in which we see God. It is as if man were a spark of the soul of the universe. How came man, except as he came out of the life of God? Here is the truth in the religions that have represented man as God's child. What less can you say of him?

Shall we complain of the fact that man is not God, but only the child of God? that at the outset he does not know himself and must grow to his stature in order to know God? We answer as before: Grant man's divine destiny, grant that the universe marches on, as Paul writes, toward "the manifestation of the sons of God," and all the travail of the ages is justified. Could

we know God without this age-long travail? And what more do we ask than that we should enter at last into the fullness of the life of God? I know that there are curious metaphysical puzzles about these things, to which, I believe, there may be rendered metaphysical answers. How, for instance, it is asked, can man be of the divine nature who only was born a few years ago? I hold that there is a true sense in which every soul of us can say, as Jesus once said, "Before Abraham was, I am." We have all been in the thought of God from eternity. In the higher realms of existence the questions of time and space give way. I am not speaking, however, for the purpose of raising or answering metaphysical questions, but, rather, in order to set forth an actual, rational, and workable philosophy of life.

There was a time, perhaps within historical bounds, when no one could say of man what we are able confidently to claim to-day. What Assyrian, Egyptian, or

Hebrew prophet had the facts at his hand to teach the doctrine of a divine man, as we may teach this sublime faith? There was needed a type of life that should combine in itself all that we hold needful to the perfection of God. This is the doctrine of the Incarnation, or the God-man. There must be shown a man of whom it could be truly said, "Very God of very God." I am unable to make any supernatural claim for Jesus. I cannot make him real to my mind, as an absolute or unique being. I do not care to insist that he must have been the first specimen of a new type of manhood. As matter of fact, his name and life represent, as fully as any one needs to see in one life, the great elements that constitute our thought of divineness. The manly force, the mind, the will are matched with goodness or love. Here is one who has caught the love-message of the universe. We have assumed that good will is at the heart of the world. Here now is good will, dominant in the life of a man. There is

nothing finite or measured about it. It is as inexhaustible as the infinite sources from which it springs. Here are the first fruits of the universe. In a man is the manifestation of all that constitutes God. A son of God has come to consciousness, has entered upon his manhood. A man walks the earth, the citizen of the universe, unassailable by evil, beyond the reach of fear. Whenever this type of man appeared, the love story from God to man began to grow clear.

The beauty of our doctrine of the incarnation is that, though it is told in the familiar words of the Bible, it does not depend in the slightest degree upon any particular form of the story. The story of Jesus is credible, because as soon as that type of life once appeared, other flowers like it leaped into beauty, and shone along the march of human history, throughout all the toiling centuries. The springtime of man's higher life had arrived. Who is so poor to-day as not to know living men and



women in whose faces we have seen the eternal? Yes, there are everywhere those who, at least in their highest moments, have known that God and man meet and are one. The men of hate, however many millions they may yet seem to number, are giving way in the world to the rule of the men of good will, the grown children of God. What is civilization but the reign of Good Will in the earth?

The true doctrine of prayer follows immediately. Here is God seeking to communicate his power and his thought to his child. The wide universe exists to carry the forces and the message of Good Will. What shall man do to catch God's thought and wield his power? Shall he stand child-fashion and try to bend the infinite will to his selfishness? This is not to be intelligent. This is to stand outside of the current, where the electric forces move. Let man, then, bring his little life into line with the almighty and beneficent motion. Let man find what God wants, as Abraham

Lincoln once said, and try to do it. Let the Good Will throb in him, and lo! in the moment when God and man are at one, the man rises to the height of his power and efficiency, his sight clears, his heart is at rest; God speaks and he hears; all things move to do his bidding. The man who loves, in the hour of true love, is copartner with God. The universe is framed to meet the prayers and designs of Good Will. Would you venture to pray for anything else or less than what love requires? To live the life of good will is to be in constant communion with God. In this kind of life prayer and activity, religion and conduct, thinking, feeling, and doing are one. As the old saying was, *Laborare est orare* — “to work is to pray.”

We have an easy illustration of this law of prayer in every true home. The rules and the arrangement of such a home are for the welfare of the children and the guests. There is an order and a watchful care out-running the wants of the inmates with its

thoughtful prevision. The parents know what things the children have need of before they ask for them. The little children, to be sure, freely tell their desires and even try to set the good order of the home aside, each for his own benefit. Let the little ones prattle as they may! But as the children grow, a new idea possesses them. It becomes their wish and pleasure to co-operate with their parents, to help in carrying out their beneficent intent, to preserve the orderly and thoughtful arrangement by which all may be better served. The childish age of begging and teasing is presently followed by the companionship, sympathy, and communion of grown sons and daughters. What grown son asks things for himself? What does he want, once granting that he trusts his father, except what the father also wants?

What we have said of prayer is the key to the true thought of providence. In the large sense, all things fall into the order of providence. If we live in a divine uni-

verse nothing can happen which is outside of the purpose of the ruling Good Will. Is there then no "special providence"? Who wishes for special treatment, we answer, in his father's house? It is a child's wish to be indulged as a favorite. On the other hand, if any one means by "special providences" that certain events—for instance, the repulse of the Persians at Marathon, the dispersion of the Jews, the reign of King Alfred of England—carry with them obvious significance, we go further and say that all events in human life are significant. Nothing happens to us which may not be translated into use, wisdom, beauty, or love. Let us not then be afraid to "trust in providence," that is, to feel confidence in the universe and all its events as divinely ordered.

There are those who have actual experience both of the meaning of providence and of prayer, or communion with God, in this high and perfectly natural sense. They are often among the clearest and most fearless thinkers. In fact, it is clear think-

ing, as well as real life experiences, that has brought them to this conception of prayer. In their hours of fullest and most active life, they seem to themselves to be living in unison with the greater Life of the world. There is no other satisfactory explanation of the facts of their consciousness. The thought of the good God here rises to its most inspiring and practical form. It is the thought of the Eternal One, "in whom we live and move and have our being." We rest in Him, we think with Him, we will with Him.

## CHAPTER VI.

## GREAT QUESTIONS.

WE now come to the most difficult of all questions. What, first, will our theology say about sin? For hundreds of years the keynote of all the theologies of Christendom has been the doctrine of sin. Here was the tremendous mystery of human existence. The outer world, with its terrors of darkness and storm, only shadowed forth the gloom of human disobedience, striking in the face of Heaven. The death of the body was a parable of the doom of souls. Let us not fear, as we have not feared before, to apply the solvent of our theism, the doctrine of a divine universe and the one God, to interpret the facts of moral evil out of the still prevalent, perplexing dualism and diabolism into the unity, where, if

straight thinking is the command of God, these seemingly discordant facts must surely belong. I know nothing more revolting to the sober, moral sense than the traditional teaching about sin. The comparative unconsciousness of sin in the Greek mind, unsatisfactory as it was, was hardly farther from reality. An almighty and wise God had brought into the world feeble and childish man, certain to disobey at the first whisper of temptation, doomed in advance to become a criminal, and to lie henceforth under sentence of death. What a travesty of justice!

There is a solemn and tremendous word of the prophet Isaiah: "I create evil, saith the Lord." How can any one deny that this is the truth? If there is one God and one only, surely all outward "evil" at least must be a part of his universe. Where else could it belong? We have already seen that God could not have given the parable of love to a growing creature without what we at first call "evil." If God then is responsible for

the outward world — his parable, our environment, our school book — how must he not be equally responsible for us, and all that we are? Are we not at the outset what he made us? Are we not at each stage of the long course just where he expected and meant us to be? Can our conduct ever take him by surprise? Can any act of human self-will, in its error and blindness, alter or baffle the course of the Eternal Will? What indeed is the human will but a form or manifestation of the one creative power? At its very worst, what is it but a tiny, meager, and feeble manifestation of only a little of the nature of God? If the material world, including the seeming evil of storm and pain, is a harmony, may not the moral world and its story in human history be all of a piece with the universal plan? It must be so, or the parable belies the reality, and constructive thinking must cease. Let us think this out with the utmost care.

Our clue, as before, is in the thought of man as a progressive, growing being. If he



begins in innocence, it is the innocence of the animal, the bird, or the butterfly. The animalism, the greed, the selfishness of the young child is no sin, or evil, but rather the ruling and necessary condition of the lower life. No one doubts this to-day. What then is the sense of sin but the consciousness of an ideal, above the animal life? It is the mark of man's growth, the witness in him of a higher form of life. As a psychological fact, the sense of sin is feeble when men are "wicked," and keen when men begin to be good. Who feels such pain for his sins as the man who sees the shining ideals?

It must be observed that we are not trying to wipe out or belittle a single fact of consciousness. We are seeking more carefully to interpret the facts and hear the story which they tell. The earlier thought was that sin began with the act of man; as in the old story of Genesis, with Adam's disobedience in taking the forbidden fruit. By one man's evil choice sin thus entered

the world! But what shall we say of the unstable moral equilibrium of the man who only needed the touch of a single temptation to convert him into a sinner? If the man is wrong after the first sin, must he not have been wrong before it? What moral puzzles we make for ourselves by supposing that sin resides in and begins with a man's act!

Jeanie Deans tells the truth and we praise her. The kind nurse in "*Les Misérables*" tells a lie and we praise her also. What is the fact, deeper than the choice, which in each case we approve? What is the fact without which the strictest truth or the most correct choice would win no praise? It is the love or good will, like the love of God, which shines through the act. To lack or to fail to express in our acts, our words, our lives, the characteristic attributes of God — his justice, his truth, his mercy, and especially his good will — is to do wrong and be wrong. To do wrong or be wrong, and at the same time to be conscious that

we are wrong, — this is to sin. What is the controlling cause of sin?

“ 'T is life of which our nerves are scant,  
More life and fuller that we want.”

The pain and trouble that sin makes is the call for more life. Let this call become urgent, let the whole soul give itself to do the service of justice, to speak truth, to express all the love it contains; even sin is thus made the means of a higher life, as pain bears a ministry of health. In every case sin, like pain, tells the story of low, deficient, or imperiled vitality. That I did wrong was only a symptom that my moral strength was feeble or immature. I was a child; I had not yet got control of my animal nature.

The significant fact in the so-called consciousness of sin is not an act, but a state. The acts accounted as sins arise out of the animal state. The man carries along with him, as he grows upwards, the survival of animal passions, appetites, and selfishness.

Selfishness breaking into expression violates the growing sense of a higher life ; it hurts and pains. The pain marks growth. The sense of sin shows the transition from the animal life to the life of a son of God, from physical law to the law of the spirit. The march is long. The process is nothing less than the development of a race to the knowledge of God. The whole outward world seems to share in the process. It is what some one has called the "martyrdom of man." But the moment that you say it is the natural order of God's world, it ceases to be a tragedy.

Is man responsible for this tremendous world process? Is man to blame for it? How could man, started thus on the animal level, have behaved differently? In fact, in a large sense, there is no blame. The responsibility is with God, the informing, creative life. All justice disappears from the heavens when you lay upon tiny man the burden of sin. Must we not frankly say that God seems to use sin, or moral evil,

precisely as in the outward world he doubtless uses pain, the storm, and the earthquake, to bring home to man the eternal message of goodness? In the long, larger view, as God sees, as we see at our best, the evil is only relative, but not real. Grant as before, that God fulfills his aim; grant that man climbs to the blessedness of love; grant that light is the rule and darkness only the incident, that the evil sets forth goodness, as the shadows mark the light; there is no evil and therefore no blame in the final harmony.

This is only to say that God is love, and that, as the old writer in the Apocrypha says, "*He abhorreth nothing that he hath created.*" How could he hate anything, since all things must be expressions, more or less incomplete, of some attribute of his own; since the feeblest and most imperfect creature has in it something of the divine life? God may pity and sympathize, but God cannot hate; while life lasts he loves his own creatures, or he would not be

God. Is not this good to believe? Is it not more rational than to suppose that the Infinite Life expresses himself in beings that he disapproves? What should we say of a man who blamed his own child for being only a child and not a grown man? Remember, in this connection, the quaint and striking passage from Paul's speech on Mars Hill, apparently quoted from the wisdom of Solomon: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at," and the similar passage also attributed to Paul, "Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways." Here is a very early recognition of the moral significance of the doctrine of evolution.

Is not this teaching about sin very dangerous? Will it not be paralyzing to the human will? On the contrary, it carries with it a gospel, freedom from the bondage of sin, and inspiration to spiritual life. There is no teaching so rational, just, ethical, and helpful. The moral consciousness, once fairly interpreted, confirms it. We have seen

that man, at his best and when full grown, is the manifestation of all that makes God; at his best the whole divine life flows in him. This is joy and peace and love; this is also efficiency. This is when the current is open between God and the soul. The man's will answers to the divine will. This is health, of which the bodily health is only a symbol. To miss or to break this connection, to lose the flow of the divine will in the soul, to have only physical force, passion, and appetite, with the controlling power of love intermitted, to be willful and selfish while at the same time we encounter the friction and resistance of other selfish wills, — this is to miss man's health and life, joy, peace, and freedom. As with the body, so with the spirit, the law is that debility or disease carries warning pain, unrest, fear, gloom, loneliness, misery. As no theory in medicine alters this physical fact, so no philosophy alters the beneficent law of spiritual life. No system of theology can make it anything but wretched for men

to try to live without God and his informing good will. Not only man must suffer in living the feeble, meager, inhumane life of selfishness ; it is altogether good that he should suffer, till in sheer desperation at last he cries out, " Who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? "

There is no way by which man can find how needful food is till he hungers for it. There is no way by which man can discover how blessed righteousness is till he hungers after it. What we call " the sense of sin, " then, is another name for the pangs of this natural hunger. And where there has not yet been any hunger, sin has not begun. The whole end and aim of our theology, following the divine parable, is to stir and to satisfy this hunger of the spirit after goodness, perfection, the life of love. We do not blame men for what they were born into, their childishness and barbarism. We proclaim the gospel of a larger life, as when the sun and the air welcome the plant that peeps above the surface of the



ground. As the air is always pressing in every direction upon our bodies, so the life of God is always pressing from every direction and in all ways to possess itself of the soul of man.

The fact is, that the world is still under the shadow of the dualistic conception of sin, as an attack upon God's universe, the work of an alien and malignant power. The sinner is thought still to be an enemy of God, and not his child. We are learning better than this in every civilized home or school; we are learning better than this in our reformatories. The best experience, the best psychology and common sense are at one in this teaching. Why then in our theologies do we disfranchise sinners, that is, all mankind, as an alien class in the universe? Whereas, the sinner is merely a learner in a lower grade in the school, often only a baby in the nursery. Or, to use another parable, the sinner is sick and calls for hospital treatment. He needs intelligent nursing, a firm and kindly hand. He

needs the atmosphere of hope, so as to be made to see of what world he is a citizen. He needs love, which is the essence of God's life. What good do you do your patient by harshness, anger, and the withdrawal of sympathy? Would you have done better, if you had been in his circumstances? Nay, if you had been in his circumstances, external and spiritual, with his native disposition, you would have been the same man. Tell him so frankly, or you run the risk of playing the hypocrite.

Is this to condone the man's offence, his lust or his murder? Must we never brand outrageous crime? Must we not recognize vast moral differences? Must we treat law-breaking with indulgence? Must we not sometimes, however kindly, use the tonic of indignation? To ask these questions is to misunderstand my thought. The doctor does not treat all diseases alike, chicken-pox or a cancer, a cold in the head or an infectious fever. He does not let his patient go at large where he may harm

others. He wisely alarms one patient and encourages another. He is shocked at the sight of terrible sores. Sometimes he uses the knife. The true theory and treatment of sin proceed on the same lines. We seek, as God seeks, not punishment but health and fullness of life. We have no enemies, as God has none.

We yield to none in our pain, sorrow, or grief for acts of sin. Wrong-doing hurts every one. As no nerve cell in the body can be at fault without involving all the members of the body in loss of power and health, so no man can do wrong and hurt himself alone. The law for each and all is to be well and to grow. To disobey this law entails suffering for each and for all. Nothing but eternal beneficence imposes this law of suffering in which God himself must share.

We see at once the place that penalties hold in a moral world. They are preventive and remedial. They are salutary barriers beyond which turbulent, venturesome, childish, or vicious life cannot be suffered to go.

In the divine plan there can be nothing vindictive in them. So far as man follows God, so far as good will makes and enforces human laws, vindictiveness cannot be permitted to determine or direct our penalties. This does not mean that penalties may not sometimes need to be exceedingly severe. They are severe in nature. They must be severe enough to meet the gravity of the danger with which evil-doers threaten society. Society cannot play with burglars and train-wreckers. There is no kindness in letting hardened and conscienceless offenders prey upon the innocent. Pity these unfortunate men as we may, good will as well as reason demands that we vigorously restrain them from hurting the precious fabric of society. If we can restrain them and cure them, these very men will thank us for putting up barriers against their wrongdoing. If we are helpless to cure them, the duty to restrain them holds good, even as nurses restrain patients in the paroxysms of a fever.

Has man then no responsibility? The wrong-doer is "responsible" in the sense that he is the man who must suffer the consequences that invariably go with wrong-doing. You convict him of sin ; you make him see that he is out of step with his comrades ; that his instrument produces discords. The body feels pain ; you trace the pain home to the disordered organ or nerve cell. You lay your finger upon the seat of the pain and you say : "This must be set right, or the body will never be well." So the sense of responsibility traces moral trouble to the center of pain and finds out the individual life that needs to be set right. What more practical fact than this do you wish to secure by making the man responsible?

There is doubtless a righteous "blame" that we visit upon the wrong-doer. I mean that we purpose to make wrong-doing uncomfortable, and, so far as we can, impossible. Our blame is for the sake of the future, for the sake of the man whom we blame, as well as for society. The intent of our blame is

not to make the man suffer for the past, much less to turn his face with remorse to the past, but to stir the man with a new determination never to do the wrong again. Our blame is remedial and preventive, or it is worthless.

We do not believe in the kind of blame that insists upon the heinousness of the man's past offence, denounces him as an outcast, or urges that he could have done differently as easily as not. In this sense blame works greater mischief. It separates the condemned and his judges into hostile camps and puts them out of sympathy with each other. Who were the Pharisees in the New Testament times but the men who blamed and denounced others? Why did Jesus never blame the publicans and sinners? And why did his pity win their hearts, cure them of evil, and change them into friends of God?

Again, most men's blame is not just. Search the man's consciousness and see what was the matter with him when he did wrong.

He was not himself at the time; he was like a child or a sick man. Divers passions and appetites swayed and carried him off his feet; subtle inherited traditions, a multitude of unseen influences and associations led him astray. Could he have taken the opposite choice and done right instead of committing the actual folly or wrong? Yes, if he had known all that he now knows of the pain that the folly or wrong brought. But he did not know then what he sees to-day. As he was then, with the same environment, with the same motives playing within him, and the same passions surging up, without the quickening touch of what he has since learned of the cost of folly and wrong, who dares to affirm that he could have voluntarily changed the course of his conduct?

What the man wants is not the blame of the Pharisee, but the help of the friend. He wants to see the difference between right and wrong, love and hate. He needs to have his intelligence quickened, his imagination roused, and his manhood awakened. He

needs especially the broadening of his sympathies. If men could see what troubles greed, lust, falsehood bring upon others and what happiness their good will might make for others, they would scarcely wish to do wrong. Show men therefore the truth, that ill will and self will are simply animal, childish, and barbarous, feeble and unintelligent. Show them that passion, lust, falsehood, injustice are the part that savage man — the half-grown man — plays; show them that good will is the strong will, the humane, civilizing, and victorious will, the will of God. How this truth takes the narrow pride and conceit out of us all and lifts us to our highest stature as men! Good will alone is life, safety, and peace. Let the best man in the world drop out of his connection with God, and cease to pour good will through his acts, and straightway he and the habitual sinner are on one level. Are we not all children alike, feeble, short-sighted, restless, when God is not in us and with us. Are we ever



grown men, save when the mighty illuminating, victorious force of the good will of God bears us along?

But why does God need to let us do wrong? Is it just that man should pass through a long period of childhood with its blundering and ignorance? It is just, if it is only in this way that noble and beautiful lives can be developed; if God is thus training us to become his sons and daughters; if through all cost the beauty and glory of love shall be made to shine forth. It is just, if God is doing always all that he can for us all; if his beneficent urgency is ever upon us. Is it not well to begin as children, if it is well by and by to be men? "And it doth not yet appear what we shall be." Neither must we ever forget that childhood and youth have their own compensations.

What reason indeed have we to doubt that God is doing all that he can for his universe? How could almighty Power do more than it does? Could we ever become men without being children at first; or

civilized men without passing through the barbarous, intermediate stage? Could we learn righteousness and all the higher values, without using the current coins of the world as our counters to practise with? To propose these questions seems to my mind like asking whether two and two might not make five. Not even infinite wisdom can stoop to command an incongruity to become harmonious. No! I do not ask that God should do more for his universe. Give me only the reasonable trust that the universe is significant, that our little lives enter into the divine plan, that the almighty mercy does not hold us to blame for the slowness of the world processes, that there is pity and sympathy for us in the depths of Being,

“ That nothing walks with aimless feet,  
That not one life shall be destroyed,  
Or cast as rubbish to the void,  
When God hath made the pile complete.”

I hold that this is a reasonable trust, which, once taken into the warp and woof of our

thinking, "makes sense" of it, and taken into our conduct and life makes health and beauty.

Why, then, some one asks, shall we not do evil, since "all things work together for good"? Why will not men with such a doctrine sit down in idleness and wait for the slow processes of evolution? Why should men ever bestir themselves to do costly deeds of righteousness?

This was precisely Paul's question, as he felt his way towards this same conception of thorough-going theism that we now set forth: "Shall we sin that grace may abound?" To ask the question is almost to answer it. Sin is childishness, folly, deficiency, disease; righteousness is health, sanity, fullness of life. Shall I go back and be a child, or a savage, when once I have caught sight of what it is to be a man? I have entered the university, with all its treasures and privileges; is it possible that I can now wish to go back to the boyish work or the boyish idleness and mischief of the primary

school? When once a man has caught the idea of what the good life is, wrong life becomes intolerable. As the old writer says, "He that is born of God cannot commit sin." In other words, good will, possessing us, excludes sin, as health excludes disease. Who ever commits sin in those hours when he does the bidding of a broad and intelligent love?

Nay, more; our doctrine forbids the custom, common among many good men, of finding excuses for fashionable wrongdoing, for snatching after money or office, for compromise with principles, for slavery and war. You may forgive barbarous men for doing barbarous things. How can you who know better stoop to do such things yourselves? How can you who have graduated from the grammar school and have entered the high school or the college use your influence to keep back other learners in the lower grades of the great school of life? You are bidden to help civilize men. How are you who know what civilization is

able to hold up your heads or to be happy, while you are using the tools of barbarism? A divine pressure is upon you. You cannot be happy while you hold back yourselves, or hold others back from the highway of life.

See now how naturally and beautifully the one divine force of Good Will works to cure, to save, to educate, to uplift. Set down among men in the most abandoned or savage community, a living revelation of goodness, of truth, and probity, and straightway it is as if you brought sunshine and air into the fever ward of a hospital. He who loves and does good stirs others also, by an irresistible contagion of goodness, to love and to do good. He whose life is in line with the eternal current brings other lives, by induction, as it were, into the same movement. This is the universal law of atonement. Jesus' life is the typical instance of how it works. Love or good will, wherever it acts, lifts men out of their separateness, and binds them together. In this sense, "health is catching." Who has not experienced it? This inspiring

and saving good will is the highest power in the universe, costly in effort, venture, and sacrifice. It never withdraws its friendliness from any human soul. It acts in sympathy; it is grieved at men's pains; it shares their burdens. Did we not say that the Eternal Love must needs have in it an element of sympathy, a capacity of suffering with its children, or else it could not be love?

We march on now directly to state the true and philosophic doctrine of "the forgiveness of sins." What does God want, or what does any one desire of the wrong-doer, whether child or savage or reprobate, more than that he cease to do evil, that is, to live the animal life, and begin to do well, or to live the life of a son of God? Justice, human or divine, wishes no continuance of suffering, asks for no retribution; it only asks that the man shall act and grow and live as a man. The moment that he begins to express good will instead of ill will or self will, the moment he turns from hurtful to helpful activity, the moment the stream

of the divine life flows in him, all righteous human society and "the angels of God" approve and delight in him. There is "no condemnation" to those who live this kind of life. What can harm the friendly soul? Who would touch it with penalties for the past? Here is gospel for every one. It is as free as was the gospel which the primitive Methodists preached. It is in accord with the fundamental laws of human nature. It is divine, though without magic or miracle. It proclaims the natural growth of the soul from the animal and the child to the man. This growth is like the movement of the plant life from the darkness under ground to the light and air of heaven.

There is a gospel here in what once frightened men. We see now what really is meant by the "sovereign" or determining will of God. Jonathan Edwards and the Calvinists almost caught the truth. Their mistake was in their dualism. They taught that God's will worked in opposite ways to kill and to make alive, to love some and to

damn others. But God's will works one way only. The will of God is life eternal, binding the world over to goodness, electing and foreordaining mankind to sonship. Find a soul where the omnipotent will does not thus act and urge, find a finite will that can really oppose it, and you have moved out of the universe.

I shall be reminded at once of the Neros and Borgias, of Jesse Pomeroy and the Jukes family. There are cases of wickedness — sheer animalism — that are doubtless the results of disease, physical deformity, insanity. Here is the wolf, the tiger, the hyena, the ape, in human form. There seems indeed reason for infinite pity that such creatures as these must exist, for their little time, in an infinite world. God surely does not hate them. The best men have already learned not to hate them, but to bear with them; if possible, to strive to cure them; by all means to be warned to overcome the conditions that beget them. Even the "worst" men are not allowed in vain. They are



surviving types of savagery; they drive us to outgrow the savage state, and so to make such men some day impossible. Who does not love righteousness and mercy all the more because of the stories of Judas, Torquemada, Aaron Burr, and Benedict Arnold? Who does not now see, even in these typical instances of moral tragedy, what divine material is present in men's souls, only waiting the touch of the right kind of power to blaze up into moral life?

Let us recapitulate the interpretation that certain well-known and important facts take on when once carefully examined.

Duty, in general, is the pressure of the infinite good will upon man's moral life to make him grow and realize himself and reach full-grown manhood as the child of God.

Conscience is man's sense, more or less keen, of the pressure of duty and its unyielding obligation or "oughtness." The action of the conscience in each particular instance depends upon the inheritance, the education, the intelligence, the environing circum-

stances, upon a thousand subtle influences, both outside of the man and within him. Improve the circumstances, moralize the education, broaden the intelligence, wake the man's higher nature, spiritualize the influences that play upon him and within him, and you more and more surely bind and determine the man's action toward righteousness, toward the furtherance of the social welfare, toward moral health.

The sense of sin is the man's distress or disquietude at seeing ideals which he fails to realize, or from which he is lapsing ; it is the natural prick of pain which attends the man who does not yield to the universe pressure of duty.

Responsibility is the man's recognition that certain painful consequences to others as well as to himself, follow wrong acts and are inseparable from them. Responsibility says in each case, "Thou art the man ; take heed to thy steps ; amend thy ways ; no permanent peace can ever be thine in the path of wrong-doing."

Repentance is the man's sorrow and pain at the hurt which wrong does. To repent is to own that an act was wrong; it is to say: "If I had known and felt then what I know and feel now, I would not have done the wrong; I therefore will never do it again."

Blame is the pressure or resistance that other men instinctively set up against the wrong-doer to disapprove, condemn, and prevent his hurtful acts. It is the voice of the consciences of others, who for the time put themselves in the place of the wrong-doer. It may or may not be attended by sympathy. If it proceeds without sympathy, it becomes itself blameworthy. Surely to do wrong is pitiable, since every form of wrong proves a loss of the life of God through which men live.

Forgiveness is the peace of mind that comes whenever a man passes out of his ill-will and the isolation of his selfishness into the ampler air and sunshine of the universal Good Will. The man is now at

one with God and with his fellows. Even while he still suffers certain indelible consequences of wrong-doing, like the scars of a wound, the natural flow of health and gladness is restored.

## CHAPTER VII.

## RATIONAL OPTIMISM.

LIFE is in some real sense a struggle. How shall we interpret this fact into the terms of a divine universe? The old conception was that malign powers opposed man in his struggle and interfered with his liberty. There was an unseen adversary who hated and thwarted him. We have not only found no evidence of the existence of any enemy of man, but we have not found any space where he could hide himself. What then constitutes the fact of man's struggle? We answer that there is a law of cost or effort as universal as life. It involves a struggle, but there is no bitterness, enmity, or opposition behind it. It is as beneficent as the sunshine. All zest and high joy in life depend upon it. What do we

truly value so much as that which has cost us effort? Love itself grows by this law of cost. Civilization is its product. Think for a moment; ask yourself whether you would choose or respect a world in which all cost and effort were ruled out. No poets would sing in such a world as that.

This law of effort and cost carries with it a wonderfully hopeful extension of "the doctrine of the atonement." This doctrine in its original form seemed incongruous and often offensive. It was said that Jesus' sufferings paid or offset the penalties of all men's sins. This shocked men's moral sense as arbitrary, unfair, and incoherent. See, however, what Jesus' sufferings actually accomplished. Here was the darkest tragedy in human history: the best man who lived was brought to shame and death, and sacrificed in the midst of his career. It must have seemed for a few days as if evil sat on the throne of the world; justice and mercy had been defeated. But this seemed so only till the clouds lifted and men, look-

ing around them, were able to see what had happened. What had now come to pass? From the hour of Jesus' death onward there was a new influx of righteousness, mercy, faith in God, love for man, hope of human progress and of immortal life. These precious fruits grew immediately wherever the story of the great tragedy was carried. Surely this is a universe where evil is but a changing form; goodness is the most vital and enduring of all things. What a splendid message even evil is made to bring, when it has been transmuted through a good man's life into the permanent structure of righteousness!

The story of Jesus' sufferings is typical and illustrative of what suffering everywhere is destined to do. There is no sufferer who stands alone or bears pain for nought. As Jesus made the world richer, so households, villages, states, and nations are daily enriched by the courage and patience, often of humble and unknown men and women. In a large sense it is always true that "the

blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church." I mean that every species of heroism goes to the making of a nobler humanity.

The law of cost and effort means that there is a certain amount of toil, patience, disappointment, obloquy, and pain involved in lifting the world from the animal level to the heights of manhood. Who would wish to be let off from bearing his share of this needful burden? Who would be so mean as to seek to escape the law of ascending life, and to throw the more weight upon others?

" Then welcome each rebuff  
That turns earth's smoothness rough,  
Each sting that bids not sit nor stand but go."

This is not to forbid the attempt to prevent suffering. We are always at work to save and economize labor both in the outward world and in the realm of moral effort. We are set to learn the most direct ways upward, to reduce needless friction, to discover and to apply the reserves of power in



nature, to coöperate more effectively. We labor the harder in order that others who follow us may do their work to better advantage, with greater economy; we suffer ourselves so as to remove the occasions of suffering. But always, as we rise above the grosser forms of toil and suffering, new ideals stir us to new and more refined forms of effort. We do not escape the law of the universe; we simply enter upon the study and use of higher values and new modes whereby the eternal Good Will expresses itself through us.

We have now established a beautiful doctrine of human freedom. Man's freedom is like the freedom of God. And what is God's freedom? Is it to do as he chooses? Is it to be evil and feeble? Is it to do harm and be revengeful, to be changeable and vacillating? No one will say that God's freedom consists in his being other and less than himself. His freedom is to express himself, his beauty, and his goodness. His freedom is to show his good will through his creation.

It consists in the unalterableness of his beneficence. Man's freedom is to be the child of God, to serve as the willing channel of his beneficence. It is man's glory to show love and to do the deeds of the unalterable Good Will. There is no freedom except this characteristic freedom of intelligent, loving spirit. He is most free who is bound by every motive of his nature to do God's bidding, whose nature thus gladly expresses itself. He is free who can cheerfully take his burden of toil, effort, or pain, and even more than his share, as Jesus did, without repining or bitterness. He is free whose delight it is to work the divine miracle of changing evil to good. He is free who feels no temptation to do an injustice or tell a falsehood. Men do not inherit freedom by physical birth. The free, joyous, restful motion of the soul is an attainment; it demands a moral and spiritual birth or awakening; it marks the fulfillment, not the beginning, of human life.

Or does any one dream that the animal

man, only half-informed with God's life, swayed by passions, blinded by prejudice, thwarted by circumstance, full of restless discontent, enjoys actual freedom? Can any one seriously think that these millions of little wills, vain and helpless without God, originate action, and exercise each an independent authority? The very statement refutes itself. Who desires such freedom? The only use for it that was ever discovered was the mediæval theologians' necessity to find creatures for hell.

Moreover, the arrogation of independent wills is the fruitful source of human pride and conceit. Pride grows out of the thought that the individual willed and originated his own excellence. You were good while the other was bad. You told the truth while the other lied. You won praise while your fellow was censured. Did you, then, make your own more excellent nature? Did you compel the circumstances of your birth and training? When was there ever a motion in you that arose uncaused and un-

related, that was not a throb of the universe life, beating in you? Search consciousness through, and you find no such original motion on which to base a thrill of pride or superiority. Do you love virtue; do you love men; do you trust God? Have the great, precious prizes of life — faith, hope, and good will — fallen to you? Be glad in them as you are glad of the sunshine. Give the glory to God for them, as you thank him for the air you breathe, and go forth with your beautiful gifts to share them and proclaim that God intends them for all.

Does some one object that this is “determinism”? Let us not be alarmed by names. There is a determinism to which one well may object. That our lives are hurried along by a blind fate, that we ourselves are only the resultant of a mad dance of atoms, that we are only what an unknown force makes us — against this kind of determinism or fatalism the instinct of life and truth revolts. This is materialism, the fault of which is that it considers only

the outward aspects of life. There is no objection to a moral or spiritual determinism that binds all things over into the unity of good. Would you not like to have your life ordered for you by a superior and beneficent wisdom? Do you imagine that you can thread the unseen paths of the universe by your own skill? Is it not good to know that "a God orders the march"?

We have now a natural and rational ground out of which rises the doctrine or the hope of immortal life. Once grant that man's nature is akin to the unseen and self-existent life of the universe; grant that man truly shows himself man, as God shows himself God, through intelligence and good will, and that all the lower manifestations of his life have their key and interpretation in these higher terms; grant that this divine nature is latent in all men, and all the reasons which on the animal side seemed to point to death as the end of human existence pass over at once into the harmony of the conception of the victorious and eternal

life. You are no longer afraid to recognize the facts of the physical life; they are so many means to a nobler end. You have in man now what is worthy of eternity. You see men who, like Jesus, Paul, and an increasing host of witnesses, have entered here into the consciousness of a life at one with God. Even common men have moments of such full and royal life. All this is rational, ethical, and spiritual. The grand and marvelous conception fits into the idea of a divine universe, as the keystone fits into the arch. The prophetic movement of all life upward, each step ascending toward the heights, each individual and race living and dying, never alone, but rather for the sake of something above itself, — here has justification in spiritual terms. It has no conceivable justification in the terms of reversion and death. A million years of material progress, confronting blank death for the race and the world at the last, could not befool us into a single thrill of satisfaction in so futile a universe. The demand is not for

our sakes that we may live. It is the demand of the soul for God, and a worthy God. Who of us would not be willing to perish forever, if that were possible, rather than that the glory, the integrity, and the truth of the universe should pass away? Yes, the majestic demand is in nature, written in our intelligence, a life factor along with our faith and our love, without which life droops. Because it is in nature, because the universe is not whole without it, because it fits to its place in the harmony of rational thought, we hold it true.

We hold this great hope to be true, because it goes with all our morality. Why must a man do right "though the heavens fall"? Why must a man forever deny that any end, however lofty, can justify unrighteous means? Why must a Jean Valjean, for example, spoil his good business, dismiss hundreds of working people, let the prosperity of his city go to wreck, and disappoint the confidence of his friends, rather than act a single lie and send an unknown tramp to

suffer a little undeserved punishment? Not because the man is afraid of an endless hell as the penalty of his doing wrong. Not because he expects to win endless heaven for himself as the price of doing right. The reason is deeper. It is because the structure of the universe is righteous. It is because right and truth move on eternal and universal lines. It is because man is persuaded that his life is of the universal structure, and rests upon eternal foundations. The moral structure of the man allies him with God. Therefore the eternal hope is a part of his nature. The universe is of the realm of spirit; the man is the child and heir of that realm. There is that in him which is not subject to death.

Under what form shall immortality be compassed? men ask. Some imagine it under quite material forms; some think that we shall presently demonstrate it and pin it down with the tests of science. If so, it will be well. Whatever is found true will be good to know. I, for one, care little for



such expectations. Here and now is life eternal, with gleams of inexhaustible possibilities around and beyond us. The man is as yet immature in life experiences who does not know of a quality in the noblest moments of this life that seems to transcend time and space? For me, one world at a time is enough. That it is God's world takes away all fear of death or evil.

I seem to hear again the mutterings of doubt. The thought of a good God and a good universe, to our lower moods, is too beautiful to be true. It does not indeed fit with our lower moods. Why should it? They are the moods of animalism, of narrow sight, of incomplete life and health. In calling this the theology of civilization, I implied at the first that it fitted civilized men at their best. The appeal of the argument is always from the lower mood of the man to his higher self, to his mood of insight, when he is at his best. It is no objection to our theology that there are hours when it seems too good, too simple, too beau-

tiful, too rational to be true. These are the times when we stoop below the stature of full manhood ; these are the spiritual Golgothas and Gethsemanes, when, for the time, the light is shut off. The real question is whether this splendid theism does not seem true when our sight of truth is clearest and the full tide of life possesses us.

In the first place remember that we have made trial already of other thoughts of the universe. We have tried pessimism, materialism, dualism, agnosticism. Who that has carefully followed each and all of these paths has not been blocked at last with the warning sign "No Thoroughfare"? They all bring rational thinking to confusion.

Now, then, let us apply the great "monotheistic" thought, as Mr. John Fiske likes to call it. Let us see how wonderfully it fits together. It is not the narrow logic of a bare chain ingeniously forged to connect incongruous things. It is the logic of a work of art, a statue, a temple or a symphony, in which each part has its constituent place.

It fits the mind and gives rest and satisfaction. Yes! the mind says: In the thought of God "all things work together for good" for his children; the lines of the universe here converge and make unity.

Our theology fits the needs of the human emotions. With infinite, intelligent, and beneficent Good Will on the throne of the universe, there is something to worship, revere, and love. Our natures are made to thrill with gladness at this thought. The lower passions and appetites in us, being brought under the sway of the ruling good will, here find their due use, their subordination and balance. The self love of the child here rises, at the age of dawning thoughtfulness, into the range of a universal sympathy, and has a noble renewal and transformation. The Greek love of beauty and bodily form, the Roman ideal of order and law, the Hebrew righteousness, the Oriental longing for rest and peace, the Germanic instinct for struggle and freedom, all have place together in the ideal of the full-grown and civilized

man, the child of God, heir of the forces and the wealth of the world.

There is a natural harmony which ought to prevail between the outward organization and the inner life. Thus the bodily organism at its best is never alien to the good spirit, but is really its servant. Good will, which is the health of the soul, tends to promote the health of the body. In other words, he who is wholly a man, whose body serves his spirit, who holds the secret of self-control, whose energies move for a noble purpose, whose temper is restful, fearless, and gladsome, commands the central conditions of physical as well as moral health. Though the statement of this law is capable of foolish exaggeration, few yet comprehend its fruitful and vitalizing suggestiveness.

The process of civilization falls under the same law of harmony. Civilization is man's adaptation of all sorts of material and outward means to express and to develop large and joyous character for the individual and

for society. History is the record of this process. The problems of the modern world, the relation of social classes, the distribution, use, and enjoyment of wealth, the functions of government, the possibilities of a true democracy, such questions of public morality as modern nations face, all find solution in the ideal conception of the life of man, possessed with the divine good will. Ethics is the application of this good will under varying circumstances, and on the straight lines of truth and justice. Human laws and institutions are the registration of the successive waves of the rising tide of the ethical life. The forms change from age to age. The love of God flows ever more fully, as man grows to the stature of manhood.

More than all else, our theology commands, involves, matches, and fits a certain noble and civilizing type of life for each individual. It is nothing if not ethical and practical. The stoutest Calvinism was not more strenuous than this theology of civilization. Seize it if you please at first by

the grasp of the intellect; pronounce it, if you must, a splendid possibility; assume it for the time as a mere working theory, the demand comes straight whenever you face it, to do and be that which the beautiful thought consistently requires. You cannot be mean, cowardly, selfish, untrue, in God's world. You believe that Good Will reigns in it. You must go over then to the life of Good Will and behave as its child. All illustrious conduct grows out of this daring resolve.

I have called this theology a rational optimism, but it is neither narrow nor easy-going. It never says that things are well enough as they are. It is never content with present conditions or the fashionable abuses of the times; it never apologizes for barbarism, for "vested rights," concealing ancient wrongs, for the gambling of the stock exchange, for the subjugation or extinction of "inferior races." This would be to cease growing and attaining. But the watch-words of our optimism are growth, movement,

vigorous and manly endeavor, sympathy, and humanity. We hold that the world in the divine plan is good; we hold that it is good to live in it, and to give our lives to bring this plan about. Our optimism fixes our eyes upon the shining heights beyond us; it heartens us, emboldens us, and braces us for our tasks. It gives daily something to do. It takes hold upon the details of every man's common work and lifts them into their place in the divine order. As every private soldier in a patriot army is a sharer with the commander-in-chief, so every man and woman may be a sharer in doing the works of God. Nay! our optimism is hardly credible except to those who will give themselves with all their might to put it into action. It is said that "the pure in heart shall see God." The law seems to be that we can see truth only so far and so fast as we seek with single eye to do the things that truth requires.

Our whole argument thus finds its consummation in the deepest facts of human

experience, attested daily by living men, adding their voices to the eternal chorus of the sons of God. Here is plenty of commanding authority, needful always for children and childish minds. The greatest truth in the universe is the love of God. There are those in increasing numbers — who does not know them? — who answer to that love, whose lives have become in some measure the channel of its beneficent action. More and more as they look out on the world through the eyes of their love, they find God everywhere. They find him in souls like themselves; they find him in the most significant crises of history, under the familiar name of “providence;” they find him in the orderly miracle of nature; they find him in daily events, since all things are of him and have therefore their use; they discover the shining of his light in the faces of little children and in many a humble deed of courage; they learn, at last, to find him also in the mystery of evil, which is ever being transformed into faith,



hope, and love. With ringing, cheerful voices they tell us what they see and know. They assure us that whenever they use the theistic thought of the world, act in accord with it, and apply it to the work of life, it succeeds and satisfies, as only truth can satisfy. This is to speak with authority.

The fruits of civilization do not consist in factories, machines, wealth, fertile fields, splendid cities, — surely not in armies and warships. They are to be found in nations of men who have learned to live together in peace and good will. Civilization itself is only another name for the kingdom of God. It is the outward form of human society, which answers to the conception of the one and good God. It corresponds to the theology which I have tried briefly to outline. The two fit each other, as a well-proportioned and beautiful body fits an heroic soul. The one type of excellence constitutes a demand for the other. Every new approach to the one is an approach to the other also. Each new movement of

thought toward an adequate theism is a new call both to the individual and to mankind toward the more complete life which such a theism demands. Each new experience of the good life, each new venture, trusting its principles, is new testimony to the reality of the divine philosophy, without which such life could have no lasting inspiration. Never did the world call more loudly than to-day both for the life and the thought that fits and begets this life. It is of this that the poets are always singing in their visions of a noble and civilized world and the men who shall tenant it.

“ They shall build their new romances, new dreams of  
a world to be ;

Conceive a sublimer outcome than the end of the  
world we see ;

And their maids shall be pure as morning and their  
youth shall be taught no lie ;

But all shall be smooth and open to all men beneath  
the sky.

And the shadow shall pass that we dwell in, till  
under the self-same sun

The names of the myriad nations are writ in the  
name of one.”

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE BEGINNINGS OF PERSONALITY.

WE have so far been considering mainly certain great problems about our universe. We have sought to see what sort of a world it is in which we live. We have taken up the problem of the nature of man in incidental relation to the larger inquiry about God. We need now to raise the more intimate question about the mystery of the personality of man. Our thought here will follow naturally from all that has preceded.

Whether we speak of the personality of God or of man, in either case our conception touches, for better or worse, all that makes human life worth living. Men instinctively feel this, even before they have carefully thought out what they mean by the word "person."

Who that has the soul of a man would choose to take a millionaire's fortune, or the highest rank, office, and titles, if, at the same time, he had to be "a nobody," without any character? Who would not rather be poor and lowly, provided he might nevertheless possess manly character and individuality?

There is nothing that constitutes such intrinsic evidence of immortality as the fact that every man at his best, as if by some inner law, holds personality more precious than life. When Jesus says that a man must lose his life, the life of the body, for the sake of finding life, the life of the spirit or the person, there is a response in every one answering to his words. What explanation, except that which religion offers, can account for this sublime fact? Does it not look as if the mighty plan of the universe proposed personality as the prize of the toil and travail of the ages?

Our faith in human nature is essentially bound up in this thought. Whether or not it is true that "all men are born free and

equal " — a tremendous doctrine to accept! — the hope of human progress lies in the fact that all men share in the possibilities of a common destiny. This destiny lies in the direction of the development of personality. Deny that black men or brown men are capable of this sort of development; claim that only Caucasians or Anglo-Saxons, or a select aristocracy, can ever become persons; despise the others as beasts of burden, kill them as worthless, and it is only a matter of time when the logic of this treatment will undermine the boasted dignities of the elect race or caste. Did any man ever attain personality who doubted the divine possibilities of his brother man?

We are accustomed to speak of personality as if it were a natural endowment given to every child by virtue of his birth into the world. The fact is that in the history of each life conscious existence begins before personality appears.

Think for a moment of the life of the little child. The state of babyhood is the

state of the young animal. There is a succession of sensations, pains, pleasures, passions, desires, like so many colored beads strung together on a thread. The only unity at first is that made by the string of memory upon which the beads are threaded; but this is not real or constructive unity. There is no freedom in the young child, who is moved from within and without by a variety of compelling causes, visible and invisible. He uses will, but it is like a blind force. It is not free will.

The infant is essentially and instinctively selfish. His aim is to express himself, to get, to enjoy. We do not blame him for his selfishness — he cannot help it; it is the condition of infantile or physical life. He is dimly conscious at times that other beings oppose and overrule his desires. But he is not at first conscious of doing any wrong in asserting himself as against every one else.

The infant carries no load of regrets for past disappointments and failures, or of apprehensions for future ills. He suffers no

pains of a divided will, at war within himself. Neither does he pretend to be anything else than a child. In his simplicity, in his docility, in his capacity for complete joy or rest, in the fact that he lives, not in the past or in the future, but in the present and by the hour, taking things as they come, giving himself utterly to the life of the hour, — the infant, being a complete child of nature, is the constant model and parable of that higher moral and spiritual state, likewise the outgrowth of nature, to which the man is at last destined to come.

Would it be better if the infant never emerged from his infancy? Is it true that childhood is the happiest time in the life of man? This would be to call human life a failure. Nevertheless there is a long period into which infancy imperceptibly passes, wherein the charm, the ease, the grace, and the joyousness of infancy largely disappear. It is as necessary a state as infancy. It is like the period in plant life that follows the beauty of the tender leaf and the blossoming

flower. The fruit now has set and it grows, but it is small and acid. Let us watch the child as he likewise grows.

The miracle of self-consciousness has now come into being. The youth wonderingly says: "I am I," or perhaps, "I think, therefore I am." Self-consciousness, in its earlier immature development, makes him an egotist and for a time fills him with the egotist's illusions. Do not illusions naturally belong in the shadow-land that lies between infancy and the heights of intelligent manhood? The common illusion of boyhood and youth, and of man in the barbarous ages, is the sense of the enormous importance of the individual. It is a grave question whether the circumstances of the well-to-do modern home do not too commonly miseducate our children in the direction of an exaggerated self-consciousness. What is more precious than the life of the baby? Is it strange that the child, as he grows, long carries with him this sense of his own relative magnitude? It is as if the life, nebulous at first,

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had become hardened and concentrated into the shape of a separate planet. The little planet thinks itself the center of the whole solar system.

There is nothing wrong or alarming in the self-conscious, adolescent stage. Egotism does no harm so far as it is a mere step in a process. The youth is learning values, and his own values are the first which he learns. Meantime, other values appear out of perspective. What others do, or get, or think, or suffer, or enjoy, seems unimportant in that period when the individual makes himself the center of the universe.

Egotism expresses itself in various subtle forms, such as vanity, conceit, pride of natural endowments, of birth and family, envy and jealousy. These phases of life properly belong to the period of transition from the animal realm. The animals — parrots, dogs, and horses — show amusing parodies of human egotism. Alas for man, destined for higher things, if ever the force and growth of the life, failing to develop into manhood,

pass over into the sustenance and perpetuation of these merely childish and animal qualities ! To develop the man and to subdue the brute in the man is the problem of all education. The nature and conditions of the problem are, as yet, hardly understood. How few youths fairly know what it is to attain manhood ! How ridiculously men and women, well grown in years, remain children still, with the toys and petty ambitions of children, without the child's fresh enthusiasm and naïve zest !

Egotism not only appears in the shape of pride and conceit ; it also shows itself in the more delicate forms of morbid self-depreciation and false modesty. There is an exaggerated conscientiousness that mourns over its own shortcomings rather than over the harm that wrong does to others. Who is more really an egotist than the moral invalid, always feeling his pulse, complaining of his symptoms of ethical distress, or brooding over men's blame and censure ? Many a time actual physical ailments grow out of

morbid egotism and its characteristic habits of jealousy, envy, and bitterness.

It is, moreover, the egotist's peculiarity to insist that his sorrows, sufferings, virtues, and even his faults are exceptional. He is narrow-sighted and introspective. Let him look outward and see the great world of mankind. There is the same human nature — enjoying, suffering, sinning, struggling, it may be overcoming — in a multitude of lives. There is one common clay, or rather one divine nature with its unfathomed possibilities.

Another illusion of egotism is that the individual is a little creator all by himself. He imagines that whatever he does arises out of his own power, skill, or wisdom. If he does wrong he fancies that he, a tiny Prometheus, defies the gods. If he is virtuous he assumes that he deserves special credit for his achievement. Speaking or writing, he supposes that he is original. The boy at the turning-lathe in his father's shop, using his father's timber, tools, and models, watching

his father's motions, taught by his words, applying the power of the great water-wheel or dynamo, fancies that he makes things out of his own head, with his own skill, with power of his own !

The egotist thinks himself perfectly free. The more shallow he is, the more stoutly he claims to possess the liberty of choice in every act. Whatever he does, he thinks that he might with equal ease have done the opposite. He likes, indeed, to regard himself as a sort of automobile. The name of the automobile would indicate that the machine moves itself. One might imagine it boasting over the horse and carriage, or over the railroad train, drawn by a locomotive. But the automobile, as every one knows, has no free motion whatever. It depends absolutely upon a store of power drawn from the central source. It is controlled by rigid conditions.

Notice another curious illusion brought over from babyhood. It is that man's chief end is to get things for himself. The sel-

fishness of the child is the instinct of the animal. Even in the animal world this instinct involves struggle with other creatures. In the realm of human life selfishness, or the animal law, straightway brings inward strife. The truth is, self-consciousness involves at first a twofold life. There seems to be a lower self — the earlier, animal life which filled babyhood — and a higher or inner self, subtle, mysterious, authoritative. Often there seem not two voices only, but various selves, as if different sides and aspects of the nature were each striving for the mastery of the life. The strange inner self seems at times to disappear from sight, but lo! as one watches, it comes again, like a still, small voice rising out of the discord of each inward conflict. It observes, it passes judgment, it lays down laws, it urges and commands, it seems sometimes to pity, or again kindly to smile, as if with good-humored patience, at the youth's awkward attempts to play the part of a man. If the chief end of the baby or animal is to get for

himself, what means the appearance in man, at the threshold of his career, of this new invisible self, interposing a veto, more or less audible, upon every movement of selfishness? Is not this the real man, the person who is destined to be?

We see now no longer merely a stream of sensations blindly following one another. The materials of consciousness are arraying themselves constructively into the lines of habits, good or bad, and under the forms of principles. Moments of pain, or pleasure, of appetite, desire, or aspiration fall into their proper place in classes; some are marked good, others bad. Some belong to the animal man; others do the behests of the higher self. Elemental passions seem to rise in the man and to sway his life, as if he were a log caught by the waves. Or again, music sounds in his ears, and visions appear before him, letting him into the secrets of another and holier realm. Strange, mighty, opposing forces seem to be struggling for the possession of his soul. This is "the storm

and stress " period of life. Paul knew about it when speaking from the depths of his heart he cried out, "For that which I do I allow not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I." Who has never had moments that correspond to this remarkable confession?

We are sometimes tempted to complain at the fact of self-consciousness and to wish that it had never arisen? It surely does not at once bring happiness, rest, or peace. It interferes with man's efficiency. It stops a man on the verge of action, and makes him think what he is doing. He is not so able an animal for this wonderful human gift of self-consciousness. The longer the period of egotism, pride, self-will, and selfishness lasts, the worse he is as a man.

There are no greater ills in human life than those traceable to pride, conceit, egotism, that is, the illusion about the individual's exceptional importance, and selfishness, or the illusion that every man must look out for himself first and always. Hence come hate,

quarrels, fighting, wars, envies, jealousies among men and nations. Hence come all manner of inward unrest, bitterness, unhappiness, doubt, and fear. All tragedies are here, devastating the lives of generations. Multitudes live their lives in this state of divided self-consciousness, of inward struggle, and egotism. Is such life worth living?

But wait. See what all this costly discipline is bringing to man. It is lifting him in the path of spiritual evolution. It is the glory of man that selfishness hurts him. It is his glory that the lower stages of his life do not constitute personality. The nearer he grows to manhood, the greater the inner unrest in reconciling the claims of the egotist to gain and to get for himself, with his dawning ideals as a man, the child of the Spirit.

Surely the man who is still at strife within himself, who has not yet "found himself," torn with conflicting motives, cannot be called a person. See how many things, which a person should be able to do, this half-grown man is unable to accomplish!



He does not yet know how to keep a good and serene temper even with his own children, neighbors, and customers; he has not risen above petty jealousies; his constancy and loyalty cannot be depended upon by his friends; he is kindly and rude, generous and mean, by fits and starts; he does not understand his own selfishness, which he thinks ought to have a certain measure of indulgence; he does not know how to handle mischance and disappointment, and is apt to be bowled over at the touch of evil; there are all manner of life-experiences which he cannot assimilate or make sense of; he has not got the secret of peace, happiness, or restfulness; the universe is not yet his home; it is not at all certain, as he takes his place in the world, that he is a man who will leave it bettered and enriched. What helpless and insufficient men even a university education often sends adrift upon the world! Whereas, the university ought to train men to be citizens of the universe, obedient to its mighty laws, free, and at ease everywhere within it.

Men thought in the ages of barbarism that when the body had matured the man was therefore full grown. They imagined that maturity came with the twenty-first year. Maturity is ripeness, self-control, sweetness, freedom, joy, and above all, inward unity.

But what will you say, some one asks, of such tremendous characters as Cæsar or Napoleon? Arrogant and self-centered as they were, were they not persons? Here are men with great qualities, with a species of unity and consistency. Their lives are surely more than a thread of beads; they make a story of a certain kind of progress and growth. There is, indeed, we answer, superb material in our Cæsars and Napoleons; there is a certain structure; but it is not permanent structure. It carries the elements of its own dissolution. There is no solid foundation, or stable equilibrium in any form of egotism and selfishness. Rugged as it may seem for a while, the facts and the laws of the universe are against it.

Nay! if such were the type of personality for the attaining of which human life were destined — the type of the lion or the bird of prey — the word “person” could have no significance. The Napoleons derive their interest and importance by virtue of the contrast with the spiritual ideal which they so strongly emphasize. The bitter or worm-eaten apple is known as such by reason of the good and ripe fruit.

I have said that personality has not yet come to its own in the intermediate period of self-conscious struggle, of dualism, of stress and storm. This is the message of clear encouragement and promise. It means that the race is mainly in the stage of its unripe youth, while its abundant and tumultuous life, even its unrest, is an earnest of fuller life about to come. This is why joy and peace, despite all our material advancement, do not yet abound. The world has not attained the inward conditions of mature life. There is a divine pressure and urgency upon us to be mature men, and not children,

to be civilized indeed, and not gilded and sumptuous barbarians.

So much for the second and adolescent stage in the growth of man toward his rightful personality. It would be intolerable if it were the final stage of human growth. It is full of hope if it is only a phase in the long and glorious secular movement guided by God. It is indeed a stage in man's inner life closely resembling his early conception of the outward world. Men thought the world a battleground of titanic forces of evil and good. So men think of their own souls as such a battleground. There is no satisfying unity in either conception.

The period of true personality is still before mankind. It is a new age. Its first fruits only have appeared. It is that to which all the pain and unrest of the world point as their goal.

## CHAPTER IX.

## WHAT PERSONALITY IS.

I HAVE shown that personality is not achieved in the period of mere adolescence. Men are not persons, that is, grown men, while they still cherish the conceits, the illusions, the egotism, and selfishness of childish and barbarous times. The way is now clear to seek wherein true personality consists, worthy for man to look forward to, grand enough to justify the costly labors of the centuries.

Do we believe in the personality of God? Yes and no. If personality means a limit or a form of restriction, if a personal God is, as children fancy, a somewhat magnified image of a man, in some place up in the sky, to be seen in another life as he cannot be seen here, — no modern man can believe

that God is a person. We do not even believe in man's personality in any such mere material shape. It is not the body that constitutes our friend a person. Personality is not the kind of fact that can be altered by cutting off all the limbs of the body, or by putting on the white hair of old age. It is a reality of the realm of the spirit. We cannot see or touch the person by means of the senses, as we cannot see or touch the atoms that constitute matter.

In what sense, then, may we affirm that God is a person, or if you please *the* Person of the universe? This most real sense lies deeper than the objections of our scepticism.

Let us begin with an easy illustration. What is it that constitutes the body of a man? Is it a certain weight of earthy elements? Is it a certain shape? No! It is an informing life that builds the earthy elements together into the proportions, figure, and features of a man. Without this informing and most mysterious vital force, the man could not be. The body is the

form through which the life shines. Let us use this parable in helping us to see what we mean by saying that God is person. We mean that there is an informing Life in and behind the changing forms of the world, building up, shining through, expressing itself. Let us complete our statement of the nature of this indwelling Life. When we say that God is person, we mean that there is infinite Good Will, using almighty power, by all the methods of intelligence, for the highest welfare of all beings. Here is the thought of a person to reverence, to love, to obey, to be glad in forever. In this sense, sublime and transcendent as it seems, personality is nothing vague or abstract. It is near and immanent, reaching every life. Good Will cannot be unconscious; it is consciousness at its highest power. Justice, truth, faithfulness, right, are the eternal and universal forms through which Good Will acts. Whatever words or names we use, *He* or *It*, *God*, the *Father*, the reality is greater than our words; they are only symbols. The

Person is that which loves and can therefore be loved. It is not only that with which we can come into communion, but it is that fountain of life out of which our own personality proceeds and grows, and without which as the source our existence, lacking spiritual reality, would resolve itself into a series of meaningless dreams. In this thought of personality there is perfect unity. In the eyes of Good Will all things work together for good. There is also joy, freedom, satisfaction, worthy of an infinite intelligence.

We have seen in a previous chapter that if we leave God, that is, the ruling Good Will, out of the universe, there remains no sense, order, or unity. Personality, then, is another necessary name by which we make the fact of God real to our minds. Could there be anything real if the Life that is in and through all things were not loving, personal life? What a marvelous thing it is that man's mind should conceive of such divine personality! Could we so



conceive unless the conception were born of reality ?

If now we have a correct thought of what God is as Person, or the Person of all persons, we know what sort of personality man, the child of God, is destined to attain. The personality of man is like the personality of God. This is the deepest interpretation of the old word that "Man was made in his likeness." If man thinks of God in anthropomorphic terms, that is, as being in some true sense like man, it is because, first of all, man has the capacity to grow into the form of God. How could man think the majestic thoughts of God after him, if his nature were not akin to the nature of God ?

Define now what a true human person must be. It must be Good Will incarnate in the man, using all forces at his command, through all the channels of his intelligence, for the welfare of all beings whom he touches. There is force, wisdom, will, love, as in God, moving toward the one purpose of the universe, that is, beneficence. There

is justice, truth, faithfulness, right, — the universal forms which Good Will always takes. Show us a man in whom the eternal love is thus incarnate, and you have shown us a person to be loved, revered, and trusted, with whom we instinctively delight to commune and coöperate.

Have there ever been such persons on earth? Every one admits that there has surely been one such person. It makes no difference what theory one holds about Jesus, whether he is called divine or human, whether he presents a flawless and absolute instance of actual personality or a very close, conspicuous, and remarkable approach to this ideal. In either case we have the object lesson that we seek. I only insist that this object lesson is the type and representative of a real spiritual order. It is nothing exceptional, but it is universal; in other words it marks the heights to which the education of man progresses. The universe marches toward the production of the kind of personality for which Jesus stands.

I said that in a real and mature human person we see Good Will making use of all the man's resources, through all the channels of orderly intelligence, for the welfare of all beings whom the man's effort can reach. Is not this the characteristic description of Jesus' life? It is not that he had a beautiful figure or face; it is not that he possessed any natural outward grace and charm. It is conceivable that his features were plain and rugged; it is not at all certain that a beholder would have known his greatness. The generations who have honored his memory have never been able to tell how he looked. The power that wins men is the universal power of love, utterly swaying a man to its ends, shining in the plainest face, filling him with energy, surcharging his intelligence with light.

We suppose that Jesus passed his apprenticeship in the school of self-consciousness. He felt within himself the struggle of the vague transition time between the age of the child and the age of the man. What

does that strange story of "the temptation in the desert" mean, except that Jesus faced the phantoms of egotism, pride, and selfishness, and heard the siren voices which urge a man to get and enjoy for himself? Yes, he stood, as other men are wont to stand, at the point where the universe appears to revolve around the planet of the little life.

What we know is that Jesus emerged out of the secondary and transitional period of a human life, in which most men are still content to remain, into the higher and permanent stage of mature manhood. There is no longer any divided will; there is no inward contest; there are no "split personalities," or separate aspects of a man's life, claiming to be independent of each other. There is no time when Jesus ceases to be a man of faith and love, and straightway begins to become a mercenary man, an ambitious man, least of all a man of appetite and passion. He never ceases to be a friendly man in order for a few days to try the experiment

of being an enemy. The life coheres and goes together; it is a unity; good will dominates and guides it; good will commands every member of the body and every faculty of the mind. Under this headship the powers work at their best, as if under their natural lord. As the informing life constitutes the tree, drawing through every rootlet, tingling in every twig, shaping the flowers after their own kind toward the time of the fruitage, so the eternal life, in its highest manifestation, wells up in the soul of this mature man, revealing at the same moment what God is, and what man may become.

Is man, then, no more than a tree? The tree has only a little of the life of God in itself; its life lies below the range of consciousness or personality. The man has the marvelous dower of consciousness; memory is but one of its forms. The man knows, and knows that he knows; he enjoys, and that he may enjoy more highly he also suffers. Best of all, he loves and he knows

that he loves; his soul thrills with ecstasy in response to the touch of the mighty Good Will. He desires as God desires; he wills as God wills — nothing but good. So willing, desiring, loving, his soul is content. He has found himself in God.

In Jesus' case there is nothing that he is conscious of doing of his own motion. His thoughts, his plans, his ruling purposes are given him; he has no "original thought;" he dares to do nothing of himself. His love is not his own; it flows from the perennial fountains of being. And yet his personality is fullest in those moments when he yields himself completely to the almighty motion of goodness. Then he has ease, freedom, gladness, plentiful life. He is most truly himself when he knows that all is of God.

One of Jesus' great teachings was that no person need ever be anxious. What is the fruitful source of anxiety and worriment? It is the egotist's fear and suspicion; his business is his own separate interest, against

which he conceives others to plot and contend. In Jesus' case his life was not his own; he lived under orders; he did his Father's business; the victorious forces of the universe went with him. He had only to obey orders from above. There was nothing therefore to be anxious and worried about.

“What of the field's fortune?

That concerned our leader!

Led, we struck our stroke,

Nor cared for doings, left or right.”

Every good servant, every soldier, every right-minded man learns to take this attitude. It is the attitude in which the mind gives itself up to a task, a duty, a service, not its own but imposed upon it from above, and dismisses anxiety. All life, so Jesus taught, belongs to this order of service. It is as if the person had enlisted once for all in an eternal campaign. All that he needs will now be furnished him; he has no care except to obey. The cause is God's; the service is for humanity.

See another remarkable fact. In the intermediate period of self-conscious struggle no man makes any sense or unity out of the checkered experiences of his own life. What harmony is there between success and reverses, pleasure and pain, love and enmity, the death of the body and the life of the soul? Many a man believes in the outward universe and resolves tornadoes and sun-spots into an outward harmony, while his own inner life is a chaos, and discordant voices are daily raised out of his own bewildered consciousness. It is the beauty of Jesus' life that all the material of experience that flows into it is taken up, used, assimilated, and wrought over into harmony and unity. The scenes of the hard peasant life, the mother's songs over her child, the pictures drawn from the shop, the synagogue, the wilderness, and the stormy lake, every childish disappointment, words of love and friendship, the hospitable home at Bethany, the harsh taunting voices of the Pharisees, the Roman soldiers on the



march, the teachings and the fate of John the Baptist, the shallow faith of his chosen disciples, the betrayal, the scene in Pilate's hall, the crucifixion, — what detail or incident can you leave out? What is there that the serene, buoyant, guiding good will, welling up through every experience, does not translate into the terms of a noble and unified life? What discord is there that fails to be resolved into the higher harmony? Here is the test of personality: that the whole life of man becomes a unity, like the life of God. The outward universe is simply a parable of this sublime truth. As in the thought of God there is no struggle or antagonism, so in the view of the grown man, God's child, all is well.

How do you know, some one insists, that Jesus, grand as he was, attained all that you have described? It is quite unimportant whether we are speaking of the ideal Christ of our imagination — the most perfect man whom we can conceive — or of the actual and historical Jesus of Nazareth. It

is enough that the actual Jesus at every point suggests all that we mean, that in every respect his life solidly illustrates what the most noble human personality is. He surely gave his life with one master purpose to the sway of beneficence. No evil, outward or within, ever defeated the splendid upward movement of his life. The point to which I have been coming is that Jesus' life is the typical and familiar historical object lesson of a new and higher order of human personality. It marks the third and higher stage into which human life is bound to emerge out of the intermediate adolescent period of morbid, restless, struggling self-consciousness. It guarantees the promise of a happier period for the individual and for the race.

But Jesus' life, whether treated as historical or ideal, would be no object lesson at all if after long waiting we could see no other stars in our sky. The beauty of our proposition is that the order of personality, to which Jesus has given the characterizing

title, has often appeared within our human horizon; it constitutes a growing procession of suns and stars. Take a single instance that shines out of the blackest period of mediæval Italian history. I refer to Francis of Assisi. Here is the same type of personality that Jesus exhibited. Here is unbounded good will, flowing, as it were, out of the heart of God, possessing the soul of a man of whom we should not otherwise have heard a whisper, using all his latent powers, raising him to the heights of eloquence, winning for him mighty persuasiveness over the minds of thousands, stirring them, at least for a time, to purity, righteousness, humanity, and a new faith in God. Francis was not his own master; he was the voice, the messenger, the servant, say, rather, the child of God. Hence the noble, free, and joyous personality; he was the man in all Italy who feared nothing, whom no misfortune could harm, who walked amidst the din of those warlike times as the free-born citizen of the universe.

Take an entirely different kind of person. Why is it that men never tire of hearing about Washington? Why did he make such an overmastering impression upon his contemporaries, both at home and abroad? The secret is that here again is an instance of a grown man, a mature personality. He is not what we call the pious or spiritual man; he is so little religious, in the conventional sense, that men hardly care to ask to what church he belonged. He falls into the class of "the men of action," with Marcus Aurelius, William the Silent, and Cromwell. But see how well he meets our test of personality. Here is good will in a superb body, using grand human powers, with active intelligence, under the universal forms of righteousness and truth, for the welfare not only of his own people, but also of mankind. There is no divided will; there is no sign of discord; there is no effort to get for himself praise, place, or emoluments. The divine goodness simply uses this man, and he chooses to be used.

With what an infinite abandon he yields himself to meet risks, losses, death! All the events of his life, under the one great motive power, swing into unison. Defeats, disappointments, obstacles, the wintry nights at Valley Forge, all the painful discords are resolved at last into the harmony of serene personality.

What I have wished to show is that cases like Jesus, Paul, St. Francis, Wycliffe, Luther, Cromwell, Washington — one might cite a great list of such names — mark the natural trend of the movement of man's spiritual growth. Under a certain form of pressure, with a healthy moral environment, with a true and normal education, all lives tend to move in this direction. The type of life of which we have spoken is a higher type, in every particular that characterizes real manhood and womanhood. It is as far above ordinary, struggling, self-conscious, selfish, anxious, jealous, juvenile life as boyishness and youth are above unconscious and innocent babyhood. It represents ma-

turity of manhood, not only in the body and form, not merely in the development of the intellect, but in the moral and spiritual qualities that most closely ally man with God.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE COST OF PERSONALITY.

WHY do common men and women credit the grand stories of the heroes and masters? How is it that they easily understand these stories? Why are men so ready to admit that there is a range of personality quite above that which they ordinarily enjoy themselves? Is it because we have seen certain real persons, and felt the magnetism of their presence? Yes. But we know more than this. There have been moments of our lives when we have risen for the time to the heights of our own personality. Who in this age is so ignorant as not to have experienced the golden hours when at the call of a human need, at the bidding of friendship, at the command of duty, at the voice of truth, at the dawning of love in

our hearts, we have wholly trusted the divine motion and let ourselves go? When have we known inner peace, rest, gladness, insight, and the quickening of our intelligence in such a supreme way, as in these hours when "the Power, not ourselves, which makes for Righteousness," possessed us utterly? Then we lived as God lives; then we were persons as God is; then we were happy though not seeking happiness, and free, though bound by a glorious inner necessity; then all things that happened to us seemed well. And this Power swaying us was the love of God, ever present, attending our lives.

We have known men whom the world thought hard, selfish, arrogant (and the world was right in its surmise about them), lifted on the tide of sympathy, humanity, patriotism, till we bowed before the majesty of the true personality revealed in them. Why should any man, thus having caught a vision of his ripened manhood, relapse again into the life of the child or the savage —



narrow, prejudiced, grasping, apprehensive, constrained, restless? It is because men are accustomed to assume that life, on its lower ranges, is the only life there is in this world. They think that when the body is grown the man is grown; that personality is consistent with self-consciousness, fear, struggle, selfishness.

The truth is that personality is a new and higher range of human life, to be had and enjoyed here and now. Surely the hours when we are at our best are the earnest of the life which all mature men and women should lead, who else are not worthy to be called grown men and women.

I shall assume now that any intelligent man would like to live continuously the life of a person. Is it possible that any one wishes to stay in the region of self-consciousness, jealousy, struggle, unrest, anxiety, and a divided will? Let us reckon what it will cost us to be persons all the time. What must we venture? Must we sacrifice anything that is precious? We must sacrifice

the old illusions of our childishness ; that is all.

It was an illusion that the individual is the center of the universe. Let us simply let our little lives go, obedient to the master law of gravitation. In our hours of love, generosity, chivalry, we do this ; we forget ourselves altogether ; we go with the motion of the stars. Why should we ever try to resist the beautiful motion ? The law is eternal good will. Why should we not bow to the law, and make it our own ?

It was an illusion that the self is a little creator. Let us tell the truth. No soul of us can think anything except so far as "we think the thoughts of God after him." To think otherwise must be to think falsely. We can do nothing except in so far as we each apply the forces of God. Let the child at the father's lathe rejoice in the wonderful power, in the cunning tools, in the beautiful models ; let him help do the father's work, and be the more glad ; let him own, as all the great doers and thinkers have done, that

he "can do nothing of himself." Who in the time of his greatest efficiency is not forced to own this? We draw then on the infinite treasures — power, beauty, music, goodness, love. Yes, when we work for high ends, as Paul worked, as Florence Nightingale worked, as Abraham Lincoln worked, the infinite resources are ours. There is, indeed, many a remarkable testimony to this effect from the men of highest genius. They have written poems and stories as if they were only amanuenses, writing at the dictation of another; they have spoken as if they were for the time being inspired; they have invented as if the bright thoughts merely "came to them."

It was an illusion that the human will is independent of God. Independent of the ruling Good Will? Willing what God does not bid? This would be ill will, childish and futile. What do I will at my best, and when I see clearly? I will what is good — justice, mercy, the happiness and welfare of all. Nothing else or less is intelligent.

Why do I so will that which is good and beautiful? Not surely because I first conceived it, but because God so moved me to will. My good will is his will. My ill will is the lack or absence of his will; it is so much power misdirected. Let us tell the truth, that our wills, as Tennyson said, are ours to make them his. Were we ever at rest except at such times as we let the Good Will carry us upon our way?

It was an illusion that we are here in this wonderful universe to get and to absorb each for himself. Children may think so; savages may think so. But that cannot long be the law of the child which is not the law of the father. And what is the law of the father? The eternal law of the universe is to give, to share, to do, to achieve, to express his beneficence. This is our law therefore. Own it, try it, trust it.

But must we not get — get money, food, education, leisure, position, honor? What if Jesus, Francis of Assisi, Wycliffe, Wesley, Washington, had said this? Their lives

would have come to nought. Their memories would have been written in the sands. They sought first to give, to achieve, to carry light, and lo! the eternal miracle was enacted; all things, houses and lands and friends, whatever they needed wherewith to do the Master's will, were ready at hand. Giving all, they got whatever they needed to give. Let the heart pour out all the life-blood it has. Pouring it out, the heart is fed in the process.

I may make my meaning clearer by marking the contrast between the child's idea and the grown man's idea of the chief end of life. The child desires happiness first of all. The childish or half-grown man likewise desires happiness, and thinks it consists in what he can get, — in food and comforts, in pay, reward, fees, emoluments, in recognition, praise, and fame. The grown man, the person, wants something infinitely richer than happiness, as it is commonly understood. He wants *satisfaction*. Every part of his nature craves satisfaction: his body

craves it, as when he was a child; but, most of all, his spirit craves satisfaction. And what is this satisfaction that a man wants? It is essentially that the man may feel the divine life throbbing in him and filling him; it is that he may express in and through himself the divine nature; it is especially that he may express good will. To carry the life of good will in every nerve is the fulfilment of his being. If he has skill, he is here to carry the power of God by his work; if he has gifts of beauty or song, he is here to carry God's beauty in the forms of art; if he has intellect and training, he is here to carry God's thought and wisdom; if he has love, he is here to spread love through his friendliness. In whatever ways possible, his necessity, his joy, the law of his life is to express whatever God gives him.

Pleasure, comfort, pay, praise, are now no longer sought as ends; they are not the chief object of life, but its incidents and means. They were the object of life before the man

had found himself, when he was only a boy. Why should the man who knows reality trouble himself about ribbons, decorations, and baubles? True, human thanks, love, and trust are sweet; it is gratifying if one's services are wished for. But all these things, in the case of the grown man, are secondary and purely incidental. Shall Browning, Emerson, William of Orange, Beethoven, and Michael Angelo work for hire or depend on the applause of the streets? Let a man who is a man do his work as well as he can, and leave the result with God.

This is the condition of the highest quality of work. Selfishness or egotism interferes with its quality. Egotism divides the man's powers in the attempt to realize different and incompatible objects; it introduces a vain load of apprehensions and jealousies that drag upon genius. The noblest work is the freest of self-consciousness, as it is also the fullest in active, intelligent, sympathetic consciousness. The quaint author

of the *Theologia Germanica* expresses it well: "As the man's hand is to the man," so is the man himself to the divine intelligence. The man is at his best when, heart and mind and will, he is simply seeking to do the bidding of the Eternal Goodness. He is at his best physically and intellectually, and as a moral and spiritual being. So beautiful is the law of cost, when applied to the attainment of personality.

Two facts are thus seen to be true about life: On the one hand all life is costly in effort; it cannot be had without cost. On the other hand this very effort, involving, as it does, power, intelligence, and good will, and therefore being an expression of the divine nature, brings with it joy and satisfaction, and, in fact, constitutes life. If any labor is dull, unsatisfactory, and repulsive, this is because the whole man—the person—is not present in the doing of it. Power may be in it, without intelligence, or if intelligence is also there, the work even then may be unwillingly



rendered. But work wherein the person wholly expresses himself is joyous work. Even the child early catches the idea of such work. When is he so happy as when he is expressing his strength, his skill, his sense of beauty, or his love? So when the whole man is present in his work even pain is absorbed in the joy of achievement. Does not the cost of the mother's love prove this?

All sorts of facts from experience bear out what we have said. Who have been happier than those men and women who have given up the child's illusion that they are here for pay, or praise, and have accepted the grown man's truth that they are here to give, to share, to accomplish whatever the universal Good Will commands? This is to be "co-workers with God." What is there to lose or to fear, in going over, body and soul, to the truth?

Happiness and utility and righteousness, each in its highest sense, are here one. The highest happiness is that which includes all

lives in its wide sympathies. The most complete utility is that which embraces moral and spiritual as well as economical and physical welfare. Righteousness is simply the process of the eternal Good Will, whether in God or man, seeking its beneficent ends by the most direct and universal highways.

A question may occur at this point whether there may not be some sacrifice of variety and individuality in the conception of personality that is here presented. Will not good will, possessing men, reduce them to an uninteresting and monotonous level of similarity? Trust the marvelous Nature to answer this question. When were variety, individuality, and keenness of interest ever spoiled by fullness of life? Good will is the same in the higher life of man as physical health is in his body. Surcharge a family, or a people if you can, with the life-blood of health, and you have no fear that the individuals will all act and look alike. Let all grow tall and large and strong, eliminate

disease with the puny variations that it produces, and what type of human beauty will suffer loss? Develop likewise the mind of a people to its utmost power, as the Athenian mind was developed in the age of Pericles, and you have what is known as "originality" in all its varieties of thoughtfulness, wit, humor, and art; you cannot have this fruitful originality in a brutalized or ignorant population. But there is no such development of the native and unused faculties, on which all individuality depends, as that which comes about under the pressure of unselfish love, public spirit, or the sense of the companionship of God. The brilliancy of the Athenian Commonwealth was only the earnest of the possibilities of the coming "republic of God."

We have in a simple and rational form a grand spiritual reality which men have groped after for ages; only the few, so far, have found it. Oriental sages with vigils and fastings sought often in vain a secret of wisdom and peace. Buddha vaguely

shadowed forth, under the mystical name of Nirvana, the release of man's spirit from the bondage of the flesh. Good Quakers caught the idea of a life lived in communion with the eternal. Wesley and the Methodists called this "personal" religion, and taught men that they could never be "saved" till they had "experienced" it, each for himself. Schopenhauer strangely attempted to reach philosophic calm and contentment by a flank movement of negative or pessimistic thought. Thousands of votaries of "Christian Science" to-day approach the same end by seeking altogether to ignore certain of the natural conditions of finite life. What innumerable forms have there been, — often gloomy, austere, or fantastic, — through which men have sought salvation from the dreary middle region of self-consciousness, pride, a divided will, and the chronic pains of selfishness! Under these various forms men were feeling their way to a very clear and beautiful interpretation of the meaning of the turmoil and struggle of human existence.

There is a way of escape and release from the wretchedness of self-consciousness and the wearying pains of egotism. There is a "peace that passeth understanding;" the struggling will becomes God's will, and is at rest. There is a conscious joy, like the joy of God, into which the self-consciousness is absorbed. There is a range of human existence, here and now, in which God and man meet and are one. What mysterious Nirvana, or what fancied heaven, is so sweet as daily existence becomes in God's world, where we now are? As the little planet is held in its orderly course, swinging in space, so we see that our lives, moved by God's love, bound by the infinite gravitation of his beneficent will, are forever safe in his keeping. Let him use our souls as he will for love's sake. This is all that we ask; it is life to do the bidding of the Eternal Goodness.

What wonder if the body oft-times feels the touch of this higher life, and the abounding health of the spirit revives the empty springs of the physical nature! Man

is one, and the whole being, body and soul, is at its best when the man rises to his stature and takes his place in the universe as a son of God.

We are told that man's childhood is prolonged as he becomes more highly developed. Processes that once filled the entire life of the remote progenitors from which he is derived are now crowded into the lengthened period of infancy. Something like this is true of man's intellectual and spiritual experiences. The youth of a modern generation may live through changes, feelings, aspirations, marvelous thoughts and activities, such as savage man never knew. What the seer of ancient time reached at the end of a lifetime may become at last by "mystic generation" the common inheritance, taught in our schools, practised by multitudes.

The secret of personality is the grandest lesson to be learned from the ancient times. Glozed over and hidden away by ages of priestcraft and superstition, it comes to us

in a new light as an opening century dawns. Illustrious names, a multitude of splendid experiences, the witness of men of different types of mind, a golden thread of precious history, vast social needs, the illustrations of a new science, — all concentrate to-day to develop in mankind a fresh urgency toward a higher stage of freedom, happiness, and efficiency. What the man of old times, after weary years, died without understanding, any youth can now try, taste, and know for himself. Nay, he is not fully a man till he receives, as it were, the spurs of knighthood, in taking on the powers and privileges of a person. The world is coming to see this.

We may now easily see the important fact which generations of religious thinkers were groping after under the rather misleading name of "conversion." Dr. G. Stanley Hall and others who are making a psychological study of childhood and youth tell us that at the age of dawning maturity the moral and spiritual nature, beginning to confront the mysteries of life, tends to adjust itself to new

and larger relations. The youth awakes to see that he is not here to lead a tiny, separate life, but that he belongs to the universe. The tendency to recognize this majestic fact may be stifled and checked, as the tendency of the apple tree to bear fruit in its season may be thwarted by a blight. We are simply tracing the normal and healthy movement of life, when the youth has his fair chance to grow to full manhood. If now he takes the course of his true development, if he makes the new and larger adjustments of his life to meet the grand environment to which he belongs, in this case he becomes a person. His life answers back to the promptings of the life of the universe, and begins to exhibit the likeness of God. When once this change of attitude toward the larger and higher life has taken place in him, we do not say that he is "saved," for he has never been lost, but we may say that "it is well with him." He can now be trusted and depended upon; he will fit his place in the organic body of society. He has become a helper



and friend of men; his life now assumes unity and takes on its proper beauty and character. There are many temptations from which he is henceforth clear. How, for example, can a man who really believes in a divine universe do a deliberate injustice or stoop to a career of selfishness?

The fault to be found with most churches of all denominations is, that they fail to understand the significance of personality and of the natural process of transition through which a youth enters upon it. They altogether minimize the importance of this transition period. They often make the change seem dreadful and supernatural which is, in fact, thoroughly normal, divine, beautiful, and full of hope.

The true teaching about personality adds a momentous factor in all education. How can that be a complete education which fails to bring the youth out of the illusions of childhood into the solid realities of a manly personality? How can that be a university out of whose doors youth pour into the world —

still vain, narrow, arrogant, self-seeking ego-tists — to do the deeds of selfishness? How can the university have fulfilled its true discipline, if while its students know the relation of the little earth to the great central sun they do not apprehend the relation of their own lives to the life of the universe? Let us agree that no youth is educated till he has learned to be a grown man, a person; that is, till Good Will altogether possesses him, uses all his powers, and makes him its happy instrument. What else is a man for? What higher life can he possess? Let us agree that no man is fitted to teach in a university unless he believes with all his heart in the divine universe, some little part of whose activities it is his business to interpret. How can the teacher bring the youth forward and up to the heights of true personality unless the teacher has himself become a person, that is, a constant, loving, beneficent will, like the will of God?

The churches will sometime take up this splendid message. The world will have no

use for any other type of church. Why should a church, at least a church bearing the name of the greatest lover of men, bury his gospel and put off life till another existence? Life is here; God is here. Churches exist to bring men face to face with God. What is a church for, except to possess men's souls with active, earnest, gladsome good will, running in all the channels of a wise intelligence, irrigating and fertilizing all human enterprises with its life? Of what use is the minister of a church, unless, having attained true personality, he reaches the helping hand to show all kinds and conditions of men the straightest path upward?

Here is that of which all the poets and prophets have sung. Here is that which all the saints and heroes have practiced. It is offered to-day as the crown of youth. Why should youth defer putting on its joyous crown? Why should men lead feeble, restless, crippled lives? Hear Robert Browning, the poet of real personality. Is it not splendid truth that he sings?—

“ For life with all it yields of joy and woe,  
And hope and fear, — believe the aged friend, —  
Is just the chance o’ the prize of learning love,  
How love might be, hath been indeed, and is;  
And that we hold thenceforth to the uttermost  
Such prize despite the envy of the world,  
And, having gained truth, keep truth; that is all.”

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE RELIGION OF THE CHILD AND THE RELIGION OF THE MAN.

WHEREVER men think, especially in the great centers of civilization, a change is passing over their minds, touching all the institutions of religion. There have been periods of unconcern or religious doubt before now, as in the time of the Roman Empire and the French Revolution. The attitude of men is different to-day ; it is less boyish and more serious. There are those who give it a decidedly pessimistic interpretation. They are alarmed at the growing neglect of churches on the part of many of the best men and women. These excellent people are not opposed to church-going, but they have little or no use for it. There are other ways in which they are pleased to

spend their Sundays. The truth is that they have no live interest in the things for which churches at present stand. They feel no necessity for what is conventionally known as "the worship of God;" they have no sense of duty, obliging them to pray to God or to praise him; neither can they be easily frightened, as men once were, into worshiping God. Perhaps they have grievances against the institutions of religion. What brave, helpful words, they complain, are the churches speaking in these days in behalf of human welfare? Where do the churches carry the banners of reform? There were never so many earnest people as there are to-day who are convinced that the institutions of religion are behind the needs of the times.

What is the true explanation of this change of attitude of the modern world toward the churches? It means a new demand for a higher form of religion. It means that men are loosening their hold, as they must, of the lower round of the ladder,

in order presently the better to seize a higher round. I wish to show that the present upheaval in religious beliefs and habits is extremely radical and important; it marks a sublime process of change from the religion of the childhood of the world to the religion of grown men.

I can best illustrate what I mean from the history of the religious experience of any mature individual. In every such case you will discover a wide change from the thoughts and feelings of childhood. It has often been a change that passed for a time through the shadows of doubt, where the teachings of the child life were subjected to vigorous questioning. But in the case of normal growth the movement is not toward the negation or denial of religion; it is rather toward a larger understanding and more positive affirmation. Many a man might say, as the mayor of a certain great American city once did say: "I went to church as a boy because I had to go; as a young man I went because I thought it my

duty ; I go now because I enjoy it." The truth is, that the man needs a very different form of religion to meet his needs and to satisfy his mind, from that which satisfies children. You expect that the man's religion will grow and change to correspond to the growth of his thought and his character. The change which the normal or representative man thus experiences is the change through which men generally must also pass. As you see here and there a single tufted top in a cornfield, you know by that token that the whole field will sooner or later "be white to the harvest." So the multitude of men tend in due time to follow the course of their leaders in thought and conduct. See now if the indications are not well marked that mankind, in so far as civilization has set in, is about to rise to a new grasp of religion, — in short, to a religion that fits grown and civilized men.

The characteristics of the religion of the child are few and simple. In the first place the child's religion is taken on authority ; he



believes whatever he is told by his parents or by priests and ministers ; he takes truths and superstitions with equal credulity. A child's religion also consists largely of conventional forms and ceremonies. To say prayers, to count beads, to make the sign of the cross, to stand up and kneel down, — pageants, shows, candles, processions, — such things seem to the childish mind to make the essence of religion. The child associates religion with certain special places and with a peculiar atmosphere. A grand temple, with its half lights, with incense, and music, appeals to the instincts of wonder, awe, and fear. That God should be in the thunder seems to the childish mind more likely than that God should be in “the still small voice.”

The child's religion, if it is moral at all, has only a conventional morality. Religion demands the observance of certain duties, as, for instance, keeping Sunday, or confessing one's sins. It forbids murder and blasphemy. The child merely learns the ten command-

ments by rote. How rarely do children ever catch the spirit that lifts the rules into so many forms of beauty? The religion of the child touches only a part and surface of his life. He is religious and worshipful to-day; to-morrow he goes to his school or to his sport. He is religious when he says his prayers; the next moment he forgets whether he has said them.

The child's thought about his religion is apt to be selfish. He conceives of a great Power above him who has favors to bestow, who punishes disobedience, who demands certain observances. God is like a great unseen king, somewhat awful, kind to his friends and subjects, dangerous to his enemies. It is safe and well to obey the mysterious monarch.

The religion of the child is the religion of childish people everywhere. It is capable of an infinite variety of forms, such as we actually see among savage races. While men still lived in tribal separateness and before the standards of civilization had yet

been set, there were as many religions as there were languages and dialects. Men were trying experiments both in religion and in language.

The childish or barbarous mind is quick to misunderstand and to conventionalize ; it seizes the form, the accident, or the ceremony, and erects it into a fetich. It craves pictures and idols to worship. How could the great ethical teachings of the Hebrew prophets, or the humane and spiritual ideals of Jesus, pass into the vital currency of the human race among the childish contemporaries of Constantine's bishops, or the wild, boyish lords with whom Wycliffe labored ? The world was not yet ready for the grown man's religion ; the teachers and missionaries who understood it were few ; the printing-press and popular education were not yet prepared to bring it to men's doors.

It is only within the nineteenth century that any wide dissatisfaction with the world's childhood religions was possible, intelligent, or likely to bear hopeful fruit.

Meanwhile priestcraft in all manner of forms, gross and subtle, held men's minds in thralldom, persecuted fearless thinkers, and made the institutions of religion almost universally the means of ambition and even the bulwark of special and class privileges. In spite of splendid exceptions, in spite of sporadic movements of reform, a selfish ministry or priesthood watched and directed childish forms of religion. Can any one doubt that the history of Christianity illustrates this statement? We might say that the little clear flame that Jesus had lighted was speedily covered in the immense mass of rubbish that men piled in his name upon the fire. The fire must needs smoulder for generations before it could again burst into flame.

Turn now from all kinds of immature religion and see what are the plain characteristics of the religion that befits men ; yes, that the great leaders of men in every age have actually shown forth. These men, as distinguished from children, have always taken

their religion at first hand and from the original sources. Men do not believe geometry and numbers because other men have told them to believe, but because they have seen for themselves the true relations of numbers and forms. So men, when once they come to their manhood, as full-grown persons, or sons of God, see for themselves the relations of truth ; see moral and spiritual realities, feel upon their souls the movement of the infinite spirit, and being pure in heart see God. It is true that such men have often appealed to the authority of prophets, of bibles, of Jesus. So men appeal to La Place, Newton, or Euclid. But this sort of appeal is always of those who see the same facts which the great masters teach. It is as if they said, "Behold in what high company we stand in affirming these realities ! They are not our truths : they are universal." So Jesus quoted Isaiah ; so the reformers quoted Jesus and Paul ; so we to-day quote the poets. We always quote the men who have best expressed "the things that are more excellent."

Again, the religion of the grown man brings him into direct and natural access to God. No ceremonies, no liturgies, no chanting of choirs or intercession of priests is needful for communion with God. I do not say that these means may not be used; in fact there is nothing that may not be used to translate the thought of God. The grand temple with its ancient traditions, the village meeting-house with its bare simplicity, the forests, the ocean, the smile of a friend, the word of a little child, a passage of a familiar psalm,

“ A sunset touch,

A fancy from a flower bell, some one's death,

A chorus-ending from Euripides ” —

what may not be the chosen means to communicate the innermost fact of the universe, God's love to his children?

There is no conventionality in this easy approach of the soul to God. As friend meets friend, as the grown son meets his father on the easy terms of intimate, common interests and a common work, so the man in

whose life good will is the controlling current "thinks the thoughts of God." All conventions, usages, habitudes, sacred places, set prayers, all the formal barriers that separated man from the sight of the flaming Sinai, are put aside forever, or else turned to construct the channels of life.

In the religion of the grown man fear and dread have passed away. Once the soul stood on guard; unknown, alien powers besieged it; around its citadel were haunting alarms; truth itself took on the garb of a foe. How many good men with childish minds have feared to read or think, lest some new discovery should darken the face of the heavens! But now the grown man learns to go forth into all the universe, seeking new proofs of divine beauty, order, structure, and goodness. With Paul he cries, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Are we not citizens of a divine universe? All the experiences of life find a wide, profound, and inspiring interpretation in this conception.

The child's view of religion was merely of

a single and somewhat awful aspect of life. The grown man finds in his religion that which unifies every fact and experience. What each science does for a single department of the outward world, — botany for the plants, geology for the rocks, — religion does for every side and aspect of the total life of man. Religion places you at the center where all things unfold; you see somewhat as God sees. Is not your intelligence of the same nature with that which everywhere expresses itself under the same laws of mind? Tiny as man's body is, does not his thought actually take in the vast interstellar spaces, and go out on a ceaseless quest after reality?

The child's idea of worship was of a perfunctory task or duty. God demanded it; the childish mind must perform it and turn then to something else. Even when it was pleasing the child soon wearied of it. What a totally different meaning worship had for Jesus! To him it was rest and refreshment; it was the drawing of the waters of life from everlasting fountains. The great



life is Good Will. What is the use of worship, unless the personal life of the worshiper beats in unison with this universal Good Will? It is as if the electric current passed in its mighty power over our heads. We reach up and attach the little car of our individual life, and we are borne obedient to the beneficent motion.

The test of worship in this sense is real and practical. In worshipping God, what do we do? We utter the words and show forth the deeds of true and full-grown men. How do we feel? We feel reverent, glad-some, friendly, as children of God. We come into unison with all other men who take the common attitude of good will. Worship is not an act; it is a new and higher way of life; it is a temper and attitude. The essence of it is to live and think and feel, and especially to express ourselves, as sons of God. Imagine the most noble, hearty, beautiful human life! To live that kind of life is worship.

It follows that the grown man's religion

is both ethical and spiritual. It is altogether practical: the man's feet stand firmly upon this earth, although his eyes look toward the gleaming ideals. There is nothing so practical as to do the duties of our earth faithfully, efficiently, intelligently, with a view to the social welfare. The religion of good will urges every man of us toward this kind of effort. In this conception we each belong to a great orderly host, to God's friendly army of construction and civilization. Every life, every legitimate trade and profession, every detail of daily work enters into the plan. I mean that every hour of every day may be so lived, with such obedience to duty, in such good temper, with such an ideal of the social good, as to add its item of excellence to the wealth of the world. The selfish life is separated from other lives; it is "material out of place." So, on the contrary, each good life or just deed counts, fits its place, and goes to build the walls of the eternal house of humanity. Who desires anything

more practical than to leave enduring workmanship behind him for those who shall follow?

In calling the religion of the grown man "spiritual" I have not meant that it is mystical, except in that sense in which all things at their sources pass into a wonderful borderland of mystery. I have said that law, beauty, justice, truth, love, belong to the realm of the things "unseen and eternal." We call these things spiritual, inasmuch as they are certainly not material. Religion consists in the realm where these realities abide. To love men and show mercy, to follow truth, to give our lives to carry the good will, — I call this spiritual religion. To live, act, think, feel, as children of God — this is to live the life of the spirit. What is there more intelligent than this?

It is possible to understand now what it is to love God. The writer of the "Epistle of John" knew this. Whoever loves his brother, we are there told, loves God. It

must be so, since all that is lovable in men is the expression of the life of God. Admiring goodness wherever I see it, loving it, coöperating with the men who express it, struggling to attain it myself and to help others attain it, — in every such effort I am close to the heart of God. Let me be glad in this fact.

It is often asked why there are so many sects and religions. Will it always be so? There will be many sects dividing men, as long as egotism, rivalries, animosities, separate them. Warring religions match and fit the lives of warring men or races. There cannot be divisive religions when full-grown men face the grand facts of the universe, with reverence for truth, with respect and love for one another. There may be different ways to prove one and the same proposition in geometry, but those who have learned the proposition itself will all understand one another's different explanations. So the man who knows the deep things of religion, as a grown man knows them by heart, will

understand the universal language in which religion voices itself. No true man can bar other true men out of his church. Already the great leaders of religion throughout the history of the world speak the common language. Draw near to them, and the closer you come the fewer will be the dissonances among them. James Martineau knows what Jonathan Edwards means. Good Bishop Berkeley is no enemy to Spinoza or to Kant. Jesus and Confucius both give the Golden Rule.

A profound question here presses. Admit, you say, that we have a sublime conception of religion. Admit that men have attained this type of religion and are now doubtless practicing it. Still it is the religion of the few and not of the many. How rare are the men and women who have caught sight of the idea of true personality! What the world wants is a religion for every one, for children, for childish and savage men. We want no new form of the old "doctrine of election" for a chosen caste. The question

then is: Can you teach the religion of Good Will? Can you adapt it to childish minds? Can missionaries carry it to barbarous nations?

We can teach everything, I answer, that man needs to know. We can take a class in any district school and, once having trained teachers, we can show childish minds what was long the secret of university scholars, great geometers, or skilled chemists. It is not childishness so much as it is egotism, arrogance, selfishness, that is in the way of the religion of Good Will. The common mind, the simple people, will not oppose it; they know that it is their friend. Did not the common people receive Jesus gladly? The sophisticated and the conventional people, the owners of entrenched monopolies and vested interests, — these have always been the obstacles in the way of every attempt at human betterment.

See now what hopeful means we have in hand, such as men never had in earlier times, for the training of childish minds in the re-

ligion of good will. Imagine a community where a considerable number of people have intelligently adopted this religion. Let us say that they have Jesus' guiding ideas, as set forth in the Beatitudes and the Golden Rule, while they have the modern man's thought about the orderly universe and about the practical duties of civilization. They have learned trust from the twenty-third Psalm, devotion from the heroic stories of forty centuries, generous public spirit and patriotism from noble modern leaders of men, and the scientific temper from Darwin, Romanes, and Gray. What will they do for the children in their homes and schools?

We have said that children want authority for their religion. But there will be scores of the best men and women in such a community as we have imagined who will be saying, in words, deeds, and beautiful lives : "This is God's world ; trust God ; fear nothing ; live like his children." No words of authority out of the past, great as they may be, touch the children's hearts so much

as tones, looks, and familiar sayings from fathers and mothers, whose every act is in the language of an impressive and joyous religion. The children will believe as the parents believe, not as they profess, but as they honestly think. Do the parents hold that Good Will is at the heart of the universe? Do they act in accord with this thought? Never doubt, then, but that the children will think so too. When did religion ever spread except by the words of such living authority, bought at the cost of honest experience!

How indeed can any modern man suppose that the religion of the future will lack authority? On the contrary, it has all the authority that ever existed. In every household will be the books that make the growing Bible of the race, the total precious record of noble human experience, all the most splendid and uplifting words of faith. A chorus of voices in many a language and from every race utter one testimony to the religion of Good Will. The grand passages



of literature — poetry, history, and philosophy — tell the same story.

The lives of heroes, teachers, explorers, statesmen, men of action, men of science, lovers of mankind, — a great series of inspiring biography, — bring the same message. What is the secret of human success? It is courage, integrity, righteousness, faith, good will. Who have had power to change the face of the world? The men who have lived like sons of God have held this power. There was never such a *consensus* of those who say this with authority. Man never had such rich illustrative material to make it plain to boys and girls. Our religion in fact meets the ancient test of the most "Catholic" faith. It is "that which has always been believed by all good men everywhere."

The child wants his religion embodied in persons. Who can use an abstract religion? This does not mean that the child's religion must be that of a single person, however august. Give the child as many

persons as you can in whom God's love has been made real, and he will never lack an object for his religion. Show him the person of Jesus by all means, and tell him that God's love is like Jesus' love. Is not God's love also like his mother's love? Is not God's justice like the justice of the best man in the city, the most upright merchant, the most fearless public servant? Loving, admiring, following righteousness in every visible personal form, the child will be worshipping the unseen and righteous God.

The children want forms and ceremonies. What beautiful forms the religion of good will may assume in homes such as we have imagined! What trustful words of prayer, fit for childhood, will be taught at the mother's knee, as of old! There will be no tone of dread; the prayer will convey the sense of gladness, hope, unselfishness. What cheerful songs will also set to music the child's feeling of the Eternal Goodness!

The child needs visible objects and symbols to help his mind to climb toward God.

He shall have them. Let the church be such a symbol, if you like ; let the “ pictures of the saints ” help his eye ; let him admire the gentle Madonna ; let him

“ . . . find real saints to draw from — Magdalen, Peter, and Paul ; ”

let him know how wide the brotherhood of the heroes and saints is ; tell him about them and what they did for mankind. Is the painted glass window in the great cathedral a symbol of religion ? Has the cross a message ? So also God’s paintings spread abroad over the sky and the face of the fields, the icy crystals of the winter, the shining flowers, the orderly procession of the stars, — all these have a message from the Eternal Father. When was man so rich in the symbols of the religion of good will as he is to-day ? To the religious mind the whole world speaks of God. Tell the child the wonderful parables.

The child needs a certain atmosphere in which his religious feeling may grow.

What shall that atmosphere be? Shall it be an atmosphere of fear and dread? Shall it not rather be the sunny atmosphere of love, kindness, truth, in the home, in the school, in the workshop, as well as in the church? Who can escape this wholesome atmosphere of the religion of the children of God?

The child needs to be told what to do; he wants conventional rules of conduct before he learns to make the laws of the world his own. How shall parents and teachers provide these rules? By reciting the ten commandments once a week together? Much more than this: by incorporating the spirit of justice and a constant friendliness into a thousand daily acts. The children are natural imitators. Show them gentleness, fidelity, truthfulness, and they will do what their elders do. Hundreds of kindergartens already give evidence of this. True, there are wild, headstrong, and difficult children. These need all the more that their elders shall do themselves the things which they require.

The child is apt to think that religion is only for a part of life. Let him associate every day with those who bind all thoughts and acts into the unity of their religion. The child is apt to think that religion is for the purpose of getting something. Let him live with grown men and women, the vital breath of whose religion is to share and give. Once teach the teachers, once convert the parents, and there will never be any difficulty in organizing our religion so that it shall say its simple message to children and to childish men. It will take on its own natural organization, life inspiring life, friend telling friend its happiness. Whether with an establishment or not, whether with paid or unpaid ministry, the religion which all souls need, which generosity and eloquence are committed together to proclaim, which inspires music, is certain to spread abroad.

Ah, but "the way is so long!" The climate of the world is still so cool toward the tender plant of religion! All history is written for our encouragement on this point.

What plant has actually shown such enduring tenacity as the religion of good will? Take for example the marvelous story of the Hebrew people after they had been carried into captivity in Babylon. When was there ever a more gloomy and hopeless period? Organized religion was overthrown; sacred days, symbols, and places were swept away; priests could no longer perform their office; nationality was extinguished; the scattered captive people were surrounded by vast servile populations, by luxury, vice, and idolatry. How could children be brought up to virtue in the Babylonian servitude? What was the use of struggling for the ideals of righteousness and monotheism?

And yet there has never been a time when a little struggle was so prolific of good. Over the narrow bridge that a few devoted Hebrew families constructed was passing the treasure of religious life for mankind. Jesus was soon publishing the secret for which unknown men had given their lives.

Presently the whole world possessed what those true-hearted Hebrews had saved from fire and flood. A procession of torch-bearers were carrying it on from age to age, lifting it where it could never be lost. At last the science and inventions of a wonderful century bring it to every man's door.

Who are we to complain that God's times are slow and his chariots wait? If the time is ripe, as many think, for the coming of the religion of good will, if the advance of man in the new century must needs take this direction, are we not glad to be in the van of those who shall use and practice and not vainly profess the gospel for which the hungry world cries? If, on the other hand, we happen to be yet far in advance of our age, if we are too few for the overwhelming needs of the world, are we not glad that it is given to us and to our children to carry the precious seed, to make it grow in many a sunny spot, and so insure at last that the world's supply shall be ready against the certain demands of the future? There is a

mighty word of the old prophet, "I will overturn, and overturn, and overturn, till he whose right it is shall reign." He who interprets these words into the doctrine of spiritual evolution will never be discouraged.

As a matter of fact, the times when vital and genuine religion has made its greatest gains in the world have been those times when creeds were questioned, when the outward institutions of religion have suffered disorganization, when priests, prophets, or ministers of religion have had to go without emoluments, and take risks and ventures. It is not strange if a similar period is before the world to-day. Men long for a religion of reality. It must demand effort then from those who believe it. It must offer in place of ceremonies or "creeds of fear" a stirring ethical creed; it must move to the creation of a better and really civilized human society. Must we not learn to say ourselves and to teach our children to say somewhat as follows? —



“We will try to do whatever duty, truth, or good will — the voice of God in us — requires. We will endeavor to preserve the friendly temper at all times and to all men. We will never return evil for evil. We will try to help our fellows whenever opportunity offers.

“We will not fear to speak the truth. We will not shrink from hearing the truth, whether it is pleasant to us or not. We will trust that in the end the truth is always good.

“We will live the pure life, holding the same standard for men and women; and we will use our influence to extend the rule of purity among men.

“We will conduct our business honorably, with the idea of the public good in view; and we will never knowingly do anything against the public good. We will hold property as a trust for righteous and helpful uses.

“We will favor the use of all methods that tend to peace among men and between

nations. We will give ready hearing and hearty support to those who work for the benefit of mankind.

“We will look for the signs of goodness in men; we will habitually expect of them, and especially of children, their best conduct, and we will trust them as far as we can.

“In the changes and vicissitudes of life we will try to live with courage and hope as those who believe in goodness and in God. We will cultivate the mood of mind in which one loves to say: ‘Thy kingdom come; thy will be done.’”

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE PROCESS OF CIVILIZATION.

IT has been common, according to the terms of the old-fashioned dualism, to conceive of life as a battle. There was doubtless something to be gained and learned in this conception. There are soldierly virtues; there is a soldierly spirit; the heroic lessons, the figures, the illustrations of warfare, have entered into our language and our literature, and into our very souls, beyond recall. We are glad that we have them, as we are solemnly glad of the terrible stories of the martyrs, as we are glad of the cross, as we are glad of our childhood, with its bruises and falls. So we are glad of the childhood of our race, of its wild days and wild men, of its shipwrecks and

sieges, its ruined cities and gloomy dungeons, its fierce conquerors, its lurid tragedies offsetting its stormy joys, its feastings, and its love-songs, its grand Iliads and Odysseys, its mighty Psalms of Hope. How could we be what we are if we were cut adrift from the wonderful childhood of our race?

This does not mean that we wish to live our childhood over again. It does not mean that fighting must go on in the twentieth century, any more than it means that slavery and persecution must go on. The conception of our earth as a battleground is not a permanent truth. In fact, the conception of life as a battle was as childish as Homer's quarrelsome pantheon on Mount Olympus.

See now the new conception of life which befits the religion of grown men and constitutes true civilization. This new conception is of a vast constructive enterprise which all men are set to accomplish together. Think of the greatest human undertaking; think of such works as the Suez and Panama

Canals. There is the need of all possible ingenuity, of courage, of patience, of hazardous experiments, of forethought, of the expense of lives and treasure. There are enormous obstacles to be overcome; there are vast engineering problems; there is need of every new economy and labor-saving invention. Yet every effort, every stroke of work, every bright thought, yes, every useless plan set aside in favor of a better plan, every life lost in the initial processes of the work, has its place in the grand result. Nowhere does the great engineer recognize any real enemies to his work. There is no hate in the universe pitted against him. Even the forces of nature wait to be harnessed to assist man's endeavor. Thousands of laborers willingly do their share in overcoming actual obstacles and bringing the work to its victorious completion. So with the labor of human civilization. The plan is from God; the power is his; the work is through the hands of his children. To do this work is life and gladness.

Is there no fight or antagonism, some one asks, in man's own nature? Is there not a battle between selfishness and altruism? Must there not be a battle likewise between the altruists and selfish men? Such questions as these show how hard it is for the old dualism to die!

The conflict between self-love and the larger love is only in appearance, it is not real. What is best for the hive, that is also best as a rule for the bee. The good emperor saw this. It is clearly seen to be true even in child-life. It becomes the law of happiness for the grown man. If any act or practice hurts mankind, then it hurts the man who does it. If he is intelligent and his sympathy is keen, such action becomes impossible for him. Only that kind of conduct which is just, truthful, beneficial, of the universal order, seems desirable to the man who has attained his growth. He loves righteousness; he chooses to do good; he loves to take the high ventures that Good Will commands. The conflict lasted

only so long as he did not see the facts of life. But now the energy which once went into the struggle with his lower self goes where energy effects something — into positive and orderly work.

The conception of life as constructive rather than antagonistic effort finds beautiful illustration in every approach that we make toward true civilization. You measure the quality and the value of the civilization of individuals or peoples, not by the houses which they live in or the clothes which they wear, but by the width and power of their sympathy. The savage life is full of all manner of antagonisms, jealousies, feuds, and hates. Tribe is separate from tribe; men spy on their fellows in wearisome suspicion. The backward communities of America, such as the mountain region of Kentucky, display these Old World divisions and prevalent hates. The duller the mind, the narrower the education, the slower the sympathies, the quicker men always are to

take up quarrels, to find food for hatred, to split up into parties and sects.

You can trace the progress of civilization through thousands of years in the pages of the Old and New Testaments. The primitive Hebrew life begins in tribal war. The savage life survives even in the Psalms. How many times do we find the use of the word "enemy" in them? More than half of them are marred by the expressions of men's hate. Many verses have become impossible for the uses of civilized men's devotion.

As the early Hebrews were themselves, so was their God. He hated as they hated. Was he not a "jealous" God? Contrast the story of Samuel hewing Agag in pieces with the wonderful teaching of the book of Jonah! To the higher thought there is a God of the Ninevites as well as of the Hebrews. Here dawns the vision of "the Father of infinite mercies."

The New Testament gathers to a focus in certain illuminating passages the whole net



experience of the leaders of the race in the way of civilization. Take Jesus' words, "Love your enemies." Here is a new law for the world; here is an end to all barbarism and strife. No wonder that men could not believe it, or take Jesus seriously. They could not yet conceive the possibility of a man facing, without a thought of bitterness, such a mob of sneering foes as Jesus met in Pilate's hall. Their minds were still in the toils of barbarous habits. The world had still a devil in it to be hated and feared. Were there not "children of the wicked one" whom the good must fight and hate? How then could the early Christians help hating heretics, infidels, persecutors? How could later generations help hating Turks, Jews, Pagans? Were not all these the enemies of their master? Hating outsiders, they hated one another also. All dualism involves hatred and war.

The great teaching of Jesus needed to be retranslated. Let it read, "Have no enemies!" This is what it means. If you

love any one he straightway ceases to be an enemy. Love all men; have therefore no enemies.

This law grows immediately out of the nature of God. If God's truest name is Love, there can be no enmity in him toward any. "Not toward a Satan," you ask, "such as Milton imagined?" Suppose for a moment that Milton's Satan existed. How could such a being exist? Would he be independent of God? Then God would not be God. Satan must exist, then, if at all, because of some faint expression of God's life in him. If God's life then shines in him, there is left something to admire, to love, to save. How could Satan defeat God, change his nature, and turn his love to hate?

If God, then, has no enemies, and if in a real sense we are his children, we must be like him in having no enemies. There is no way in which we can be so like God as in our good will. This is the meaning of Jesus' great word in the Sermon on the Mount: "Be ye therefore perfect, as your

Father in heaven is perfect." Jesus is not speaking of absolute perfectness. He is speaking of the practical treatment of men. God, he says, is perfect, that is, all-round in his love. His sun shines on the evil and the good. Be ye like him, all-round in your love. Let your goodness, like God's goodness, shine on all men, not merely on those who are good to you. Turn your good side on men; never turn hatred upon them. There is surely nothing impracticable in this.

We meet now a serious question. Can men altogether respect a kind of life from which the element of antagonism, warfare, and indignation has disappeared? This objection is overwhelming if it points to any lack of the fullness of life in our new civilization. We must readily grant that there was a picturesqueness, which modern and civilized men at least see in the retrospect, in the feudal castles, the narrow walled towns with their fever-haunted streets, the bows and arrows and mailed armor of our

forefathers. Perhaps we lose something in sweeping away these hoary symbols of the past. Perhaps our ancestors had a certain use and enjoyment in their poetical conceptions of the warring powers of the air, and even in their picture of a literal devil, going about like "a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour." We should be sorry if they did not have the compensations that belonged to their life; as Jesus says of even the Pharisees and the hypocrites, "Verily I say unto you, they have their reward." We are none the less sure, upon the whole, that the world does well to put off barbarous things, as the man does well to put off childish things. Each new stage of life will bring its own interests, its delights, its picturesqueness also.

The truth is, that what men demand in life, and miss if they do not find it, is not antagonism and warfare, but struggle, effort, cost, strenuousness. It is not hate and enmity that have ennobled warfare. It is not killing that has made the life of the

soldier fruitful in moral lessons. It is the nerve, endurance, hardihood, and courage that we love to see. Of these superb qualities there is likely to be a demand to the end of the human course; for it is out of these things that life is forever being wrought. The grown man conceives the universe, not as two impossible opposites in conflict, but as one harmonious structure; out of his soul, brought into unison with God, all hate has vanished; he holds himself in glad and willing obedience to every prompting of the universal Good Will. I maintain that this is precisely the man in whom eager intelligence, fearless vigor, and constructive energy are consummated. Shall we call Nelson or Dewey a hero, and not call Francis Parkman even more conspicuously a hero, who with never an enemy, yet conquering seemingly insuperable obstacles in cool, painstaking patience through the labors of a lifetime, at last gave the world an enduring memorial of a great episode in human history? Shall we call Wellington a hero, and not call his

countrymen Moffat and Livingstone even more complete heroes, who, though alone, feared nothing in all the wild continent of Africa? Their love, growing strong, had cast out hate, bitterness, wrath, and all fear. Does any one think that such love lacks manly power? Little does he know the nature of a grown man's love if he thinks this.

“Yes,” some one may say, “it is a great teaching, to bid men have no enemies. But is such a rule practicable in this age of the world?” The beauty of it is that it is altogether practicable; it binds men together; it puts an end to enmity; it converts supposed enemies to friends. It works to civilize the world. See in how many ways this new law is actually at work to-day.

There is one profession at least in every modern nation in which the law of which we speak is recognized. Ministers of the Christian religion must have no enemies. The minister or priest must be the friend of every one whom he meets. What of the evil-

minded, the dissolute men and women outside the pale of society or the church? The minister has not caught the idea of his profession if he is not specially the friend of these. This is not a mere counsel of perfection. The ideal is realized by an increasing number of faithful and humane men. A story told of the anti-slavery leader, Rev. Samuel J. May, illustrates this. He was at one time traveling by carriage alone in a desolate region where acts of violence had been recently perpetrated. Early in the day a rough-looking man appeared before him on the road with a club in his hand. The friendly minister drove up to the man and asked him if he would not like to ride. The two rode and talked all the morning, and after dinner the unknown man again joined Mr. May and accompanied him through the afternoon. At evening, when they separated, the man intimated that he had stood in the way that morning with evil design, and that he was more indebted than he could tell for the friendly treatment

which had recalled his manhood. What power in the world is so mighty as fearless kindness?

If the minister should have no enemies, it is not because he belongs to a separate class. His law of life is only the broad human law. The medical profession furnishes perhaps as many instances of this as the ministry. The whole business of the physician is to befriend men, cure and save them. The good doctor may be called to attend the worst man in the town; he may have the care of the sick in the county jail. It makes no difference what the character of the patient is. The physician tries to do his best for him. Even when he expects never to get pay or thanks, he still tries to save life. What enemy has he in all the town? But ought he not to oppose the quack and impostor? If he opposes impostors, this is no reason why he should ever hate them. Is there any way so effective to put down imposture as to do skilled and trained work such as no impostor can do?



The teachers are another great class who must absolutely have no enemies. Show us the teacher who has favorites in his school, while he is hard on the dull and backward boys; show us the teacher of whom any of his pupils can say, "He hates us," and we have found a teacher who has no place in a modern school. What is the teacher for, except to help and befriend his pupils? The more refractory the human material in them, the greater call for his patience, energy, intelligence, good will, in order to make men of them. The power of wise love is actually working miracles every day in behalf of the blind, the deaf and dumb, the epileptic, and the feeble-minded. The motto of the true teacher is *nil desperandum*, "to despair of none."

We shall dare now to touch the most difficult class of all, and to say that the men in business ought to have no enemies. We shall here fly in the face of certain strange popular interpretations of the Golden Rule. It means, some believe, that "one must find

out what the other man wants to do, and must do it first." Must not business men plan and act as if in the presence of rivals and cut-throats? Must they not entertain jealousies and suspicions of their competitors?

Let us ask a more radical question. What is *business*? Is it an ugly process of industrial warfare whereby some may get more than their share of the costly product of the world? Grant, if you like, that thousands of men believe something like this. It is nevertheless a false idea, and is doomed, with other falsehoods, to die. Business, whether in the manufacture or the distribution of the good things of the world, is a form of social or human service. No kind or method of business is legitimate unless it meets this true test of the universe — Is it beneficent? Does your business in some way serve the convenience or enrichment of mankind? If it does this, you are God's servant in it, as truly as any minister who preaches in a pulpit. If it injures men, or if it does men no good in return for

what you draw out of it, how is it better than stealing?

Suppose now a business man who conceives, as a grown man ought, what his business is for; who practices it precisely as a violinist plays his part in the orchestra. Why should this man have any enemies? His customers are his friends whom he is seeking to serve; every honest man in trade is his friend, who is doing also a part in a common work. But, you say, the dishonest men must be his enemies. Why? They are not God's enemies. They are men to be pitied. What true man envies them, least of all, when they seem to succeed? You are sorry for them; they and their children, most likely, are on the way to grief. Moreover, of all foolish, weak, and childish emotions, enmity toward the dishonest is the most futile. When did it ever make the dishonest man honest?

All this will be even plainer when we observe how the law "Have no enemies"

works in the solution of certain great problems now before the nation. Here is the problem, for instance, of how to treat "the criminal class." The old idea was that they were enemies to human society, to be punished accordingly. The new idea forbids us to recognize "a criminal class." All men are of one blood. All men, at their worst, and on their selfish or animal side, are close to the danger line of crime, whether subtle or coarse. There is no salvation or health, except in the life of good will.

But there are those who are habitual criminals, dangerous to society, who certainly cannot be allowed at liberty to rob and murder. What shall we do with them? The late Mrs. Johnson, the noble superintendent of the Sherborn Reformatory for Women, in Massachusetts, told us what to do with them. The most depraved women, immodest, violent, hardened, came to her. Did she hate them? Never! She treated them as a physician treats his patients. She pitied them, loved them, and searched for

the spark of true womanhood hid in their souls. She found what she looked for. Wonderful stories are told of the victories of this energetic and unresting woman's love over her most violent patients. No enmity, threats, punishments, tortures, ever saved such women as she saved and redeemed to the uses of society and citizenship.

We have another formidable problem in the political corruption and vulgar partisanship, rampant in every State, plundering rich cities, holding the balance of power in the Senate Chamber at Washington. We are tempted to hate our bosses, to despise our party leaders, to denounce them in public and private as the modern enemies of mankind. How can we help being hostile to the Quays and Crokers? How shall we ever escape their rule, unless we make war on them and their minions?

This would have been plausible to say a hundred years ago. We ought to know better than to say it to-day. It is not even intelligent to hate "the wicked bosses,"

much less to despise them, as the Pharisees once despised the publicans. Are they not men like us? In them we see what selfishness does to degrade men. Are we free of selfishness? Do we "virtuous" citizens, with our grand opportunities, do such generous public service as to boast over our neighbors as if we were men of a finer clay? Nay; the best public men never boast, never despise, and never hate. Abraham Lincoln teaches the world the same lesson that Jesus taught.

This is not to say that we shall let the Quays and the Crokers govern our nation. This is not to say that we may not do well to use party organization. I mean that we must allow no "enemies" in our politics. I mean that ill will, contempt, and denunciation separate men and tempt men to be what you denounce and despise them for. I mean that there is no man so corrupt that you can afford to treat him without sympathy. You praise the worst boy in the school when he tells the truth or does a kind

act. You build upon good to erect more good. It is with men as with boys. Why shall we not then be glad if the opposite party proposes a just or patriotic measure? Let us help them carry it through. Even when we firmly vote the "boodle aldermen" out of office, why should we give them cause to suspect us of being their personal enemies? Why should we seem to say, "I am holier than thou"? Surely there is too much positive work that waits to be done in this world to permit any intelligent man to waste his energy in useless and petty antagonisms.

The same great law works to solve the threatening labor troubles in our country. The real issue between labor and capital is not a question of wages, or an eight-hour day, or the right to join unions. There is a deeper difficulty, of which these questions are only the symptoms. The real trouble is that the capitalists and the working-people think of each other as natural enemies. Jealousy, suspicion, and fears

alienate men who ought to work together. Strikes and lockouts would hardly occur if men who call themselves Christians were real Christians, in the practical sense of having no enemies. Study the story of any particular strike and you will discover the point where men, very likely employers, who ought to have been more intelligent, lost their patience or lost their temper; you will find that there were moments when a ray of good humor or genuine humanity would have been enough to dispel the darkness from men's faces, and to prevent waste and disaster.

The same law applies to international relations. The old rule was to hold foreign powers as enemies. The law of civilization is to *have no enemies*. Imagine the United States adopting this law. Surely it befits the great Republic among whose people now flows the blood of all races. Imagine the United States using this mighty law when, at the outbreak of the Cuban war, the barbarous temptation arose of fighting



the Spaniards. "Are not the Spaniards," men cried, "our hereditary enemies? Did they not practice the Inquisition? Have they not been the enemies of the human race? Did they not blow up our war-ship?" So spoke the animal, savage, and revengeful spirit in all of us. Suppose then, before we plunged into war, that we had listened for the words of the religion of Good Will. The millions of Spanish people were men like us. There were wives and mothers over the sea, like our wives and mothers, to weep at the death of husbands and sons. Could we possibly hate these suffering and oppressed people, victims themselves of centuries of ignorance and misrule? If we had neither hated nor despised them, but held them to be our friends, it is almost certain that we could have devised some other method than fighting to adjust our grievances against their government.

Suppose, again, that the American people and their President had also judged with

one consent that they had *no enemies* in the Philippine Islands ; suppose that no American commissioner had breathed his selfish desire to exploit those islands for ourselves ; that no American soldier had written home his contempt for the brown men whom he was sent out to save from oppression. Could there have been any war, when sympathy, friendliness, humanity, directed our dealings with a needy and childish people? No! It takes arrogance, pride, selfishness, contempt, to make war. War stands for the moral conditions of barbarism.

I am not laying down an abstract principle. I do not say that force should never be used. I say that there never should be hate, enmity, or unfriendliness between peoples. You are still barbarous while you hate or despise men. It is not a Christian or a civilized nation which willingly rushes into war. I say that as soon as you are a Christian, that is, a civilized people, you will find civilized means far mightier than war, with which to attain the ends for

which men still ignorantly excuse the waste, cruelty, and folly of fighting.

The work of civilization, whether on a small scale in the family, the neighborhood, and the village, or on the vast scale of international relations, can never be successfully carried on by a "superior class" of wise and good people who set themselves over against the ignorant and the bad; it must be carried on by men and women who shall be the genuine friends and helpers, the comrades as well as the leaders, of those less wise, able, or advanced than themselves. It must never be carried on in the spirit of antagonism and opposition, but in the far mightier spirit of sympathy. The power of its thinkers and leaders will be measured by the breadth and sincerity of their good will.

There ought to be no need of further illustration. Is it not plain that the law of good will has a universal application? There is no event, no act, no word, no supreme crisis of life in which man may

let the good will go, and turn on the forces of ill will, egotism, and selfishness. Letting the good will go out of him, he lapses straightway into the child or the savage. Keeping the flow of the serene good will in his soul, he walks the earth, fearless, erect, with God's sunshine on his face. To live thus is the essence of civilization; the individual and the social welfare are thus secured and harmonized. To live thus is practical religion; the more thoroughly we try, test, and experience it, the more completely it will be found to grow out of, and to illustrate, a Theology, that is, a divine plan of the universe. This Theology matches the needs of civilized men in a civilized world. As Coleridge says :

“ He prayeth best who loveth best  
All things both great and small,  
For the dear God who loveth us,  
He made and loveth all.”



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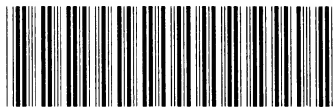
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